THE THOMIST

A SPECULATIVE QUARTERLY REVIEW
OF THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

EDITORS: THE DOMINICAN FATHERS OF THE PROVINCE OF ST. JOSEPH

Publishers: The Thomist Press, Washington 17, D. C.

VOL. XXVIII JULY, 1964 No. 3

MARX ON THE UNITY OF MAN

I. *The Discovery of Man*

A. *The Dialectics of Man and Nature*

1. *The inseparability of man and nature*

THE Marxist dialectic aims at the integration of all things in nature into a unitary scheme of endless movement, a process whereby the universe develops its latent potentialities in virtue of an inherent dynamic character. [1] In his preoccupation with the dialectics of nature Marx has by no means lost sight of his central concern, which is the nature

[1] The thesis of the present paper is that Marx never discovered what man is or why he is one being, although he claimed to have in his possession the first and only key to the real understanding of man. Marx does not reveal the concern with the problems of substance, matter and form, essence and existence, in terms of which a Thomistic solution is proposed to the question of the unity of man. For this reason it is necessary to make inferences, from what Marx actually teaches, and to a certain extent to reconstruct a Marxist theory of man. I have tried to do this in Marx's own terms, but after the attempt I am almost inclined to say that for Marx the unity of man was simply not a problem. What Marx did say about man is presented here and analyzed in the light of the doctrine of St. Thomas.

and cause of man's alienation and the necessary course of social revolution. Not only is man one with the rest of nature in that he is wholly material and has evolved along with the rest of the material universe, according to the laws of the dialectic; but, and this aspect of Marxism is original and distinctive of dialectical materialism, nature has no meaning in isolation from man. For man, nature is nothing other than the environment in which he lives and exercises his properly human faculties; above all, human labor, the transformation of material forces through man's ingenuity and efforts, gives meaning and significance to nature, of which man himself constitutes the highest, most perfect development. Marxism is a thoroughgoing naturalism, a complete identification of man with his physical environment, of human energies with the forces of nature. "The material, sensuously perceptible world to which we belong is the only reality," Engels states as a first principle of "pure materialism." [2] Marxist naturalism, the ontological equating of man with the physical world, is also a materialism, but a dynamic materialism. This is the first clue in our search for the meaning and definition of man and of human unity.

Marx does not flatly deny the existence of spirit nor even in some sense its superiority. But, just as he does not define matter, so he does not define spirit, nor does he tell us clearly what is the relation between them. Of the grossest form of materialism there is hardly a trace in Marx, although Engels does say that "spirit is only the higher product of matter,'; and, more fully: "If the question is raised: what then are thought and consciousness, and whence do they come, it becomes apparent that they are products of the human brain, and that man himself is a product of nature, which has been developed in and along with its environment; whence it is self-evident that the products of the human brain, being in the last analysis also products of nature, do not contradict the rest of

[2] *Ludwig Feuerbach,* in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels *Selected Works* (MESW), II, 364. All references to the writings of Marx and Engels are taken from the authorized English translation of their works published in Moscow by the Foreign Languages Publishing House over the past ten years.

nature, but are in correspondence with it." [3] This seems clear enough, but Marx does not go so far. The one phrase usually quoted to show his pervasive materialism-" The idea is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought " [4]-can be understood to mean no more than that all of our knowledge depends ultimately on the data delivered by the senses.

The nearest l\farx gets to a statement of his view on the nature of reality is in the opening sentence of the first of his *Theses on Feuerbach,* and it is one of the most pregnant sentences he ever wrote: " The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism-that of Feuerbach included-is that the object, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object of contemplation but not as human sensuous activity, practice, not subjectively." [5] This declaration is worth a very long examination, but that examination is bound to be fruitless i£ one has not already grasped the fundamental teaching of Hegel; without Hegel we should be truly puzzled as to what Marx is trying to say. Marx's statement seems to contain two key ideas:

1) "Reality should be conceived not only as object but also as subject." This is an obvious echo of Hegel's phrase in the *Phenomenology of Spirit:* "Everything depends on grasping and expressing the ultimate truth not as substance only but also as subject." [6] Marx's insistence that reality is not only "object," i.e., a being that is acted upon, but also "subject," i. e., a being that acts, originates action, distinguishes his dialectical materialism from the mechanist forms o£ materialism.

2) "Reality should be conceived as human sensuous activity." This again follows Hegel very closely. Reality, for Hegel, the Idea, begins as knowing nothing, not even itself,

[3] *Anti-Duhring,* 31.

• *Capital,* I, xxx, in Marx's Preface to the first German Edition, translated.

• *Theses on Feuerbach,* in MESW, II, 402.

• *The Phenomenology of the Spirit,* trans!. by J. B. Baillie, in *The Philosophy of Hegel,* ed. by Carl J. Friedrich, Modern Library, 1954, 417.

yet capable of knowing all things. In every stage of its progress from knowing nothing to knowing itself, it is still called Idea or Reason. He says in .his Introduction to the *Philosophy of History:* "Spirit is only that which it attained by its own efforts; it makes itself actually what it always was potentially." [7] In other words, reality to Hegel is the highest that it is capable of becoming; but reality is capable of becoming sensuous human activity; therefore reality should be conceived as sensuous human activity. There are all sorts of other forms of reality less than that, just as Hegel's reality has all sorts of forms less than reason. But what a thing can become, that it is. So says Hegel, so says Marx; St. Thomas does not say this, but this is what he means, in man's case, as we hope to show. We shall see later that Marx intends his statement to be understood in a definite sense that is something less than what might be understood from the mere words. The important point is that Marx approaches his study of the dialectics of nature only with a view to discovering therein the nature and course of *human* evolution in the world and in history. In our search for the Marxist concept of man we shall be led to examine the character of the dialectical fulfillment of man and the intimate interrelationship of man and nature.

2. *Opposition between man and nature*

Whatever may be said of later developments of Marxism, even of Soviet Communism, Marx himself was certainly not a positivist. He intended to go beyond the critical analysis of the workings of capitalist economics, to discover in reality as such, in the totality of nature, the objective bases of man's absurd condition in the economic order. His dialectical philosophy is, ultimately, an attempt to account for economic alienation in terms of the objective, necessary state of things. He proposed, further, to explain all the alienations consequent upon contradiction in economic life-social, political, ideologi-

[7] *The Philosophy of History,* trans!. by Carl J. Friedrich and Paul W. Friedrich, in Friedrich, *op. cit.,*

cal, and religious-in terms of the essential and consistent structure of the dialectics of nature and history. The explanation constitutes the heart of Marx's constructive philosophy, dialectical and historical materialism. Marx sees in the constituent elements of reality, or rather in their mutual interrelation, a solution of the alienations which plague man's existence, a *principle of unification* which will restore to man that part of his nature which he has surrendered to society and lost. This is the basic problem in Marxist (as distinct from Hegelian) dialectics and around it are clustered the chief elements of his doctrine on the nature and unity of man. It is a question which involves a number of difficulties of an extremely abstract and technical nature, above all the precise meaning of the unity and duality in nature and in man's relation to nature.

In Marx's view there are a few basic relationships which explain both the ultimate constituents in all things and their gradual unfolding and development in the course of time. The key to the understanding of reality is to view it always, not as nature in itself apart from man, nor as man in himself isolated from nature, but as a complex whole involving these two polar aspects of being in dynamic interrelation. The totality of being comprises the relation of man to nature and, in a special sense, of man to man. These relationships may be described as both opposition and unity, and Marx is not completely consistent in his interpretation, favoring now one and now the other. His over-all view requires that both aspects be retained, because each expresses a genuine element in the objective structure of being. Marx is at first inclined to insist almost exclusively on the opposition between man and his natural environment, and thus to conceive of human life as a constant struggle in which, by his own productive efforts man tames the forces of nature and overcomes this antagonism to or alienation from the world around him. This interpretation stresses the dialectical character of reality, seeing in every phenomenon the seeds of contradiction, of privation and tension which impel the universe

on to its dynamic fulfillment. But Marx recognizes that there is also another side to reality, that in which the parts and forces of the universe are integrated and harmonized in an ontological synthesis which also expresses the ontological nature of being.[8]

Marx asks the same question as any serious philosopher: what is being, what expresses the innermost heart of nature and man? His most general answer is that reality is a tissue or network of dynamic relationships, and not a complex of independent, unrelated substances. Phenomena must, therefore, be studied in the light of their interactions. With everyday things such relations may be of little practical consequence, but these become of increasing importance when we turn to social phenomena, and we only waste our time if we consider them *in vacuo,* as pure abstractions. Further, phenomena must be studied in their movement and development. The craving for something stable and eternal is deeply rooted in the human mind, but reality is not in fact static but is in a state of continual change. Lastly, we must look for contradiction in the processes of nature and society, since contradiction is the motive force behind all development. The fundamental relationships between phenomena are of immediate opposition, but this opposition, while it is basic and universal, is not final or absolute. Thus, the opposition· between man and nature-the fact that man stands over against and faces nature as distinct from himself, as hard and recalcitrant to his efforts to harness its resources or to understand its workings-can be overcome by man himself. Human life consists, indeed, though it is never fully achieved, in the successive bridging of the opposition to nature, so that if this mediation were perfect the opposition would be transcended and man and nature would be fused in a synthesis which would be the consummation of the dialectics of history. Actually, complete mediation will. never be achieved: opposition and resolution will

[8] On the ontological premises of the Marxist nature-man opposition, see Collins, James, *God in Modern Philosophy* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1959) 249-50.

continue to co-exist, or rather to succeed each other, at different levels in virtue of the inexhaustible fertility of the contradictions at the heart of reality. Having recognized the tension between opposition and mediation as involving an endless process, Marx sought to discover the precise manner in which and the means by which the mediation of the opposition between man and nature is effected.[9]

B. *The Unity of Man -with Nature*

1. *Need as objectification*

There would be no need or room for mediation between man and nature if there were not a deep-rooted *opposition* between the two. From what we have said thus far, it is evident that Marx regarded this opposition as universal and fundamental, and that he proposed to interpret human life as an undertaking of the task of mediation in a dialectical fashion. But there are passages in Marx's writings which seem to postulate an even more intimate unity between man and nature, which imply that man is basically one with the physical universe of which he forms but a part, while opposition is only secondary and derivative.[10] In these places Marx speaks as if opposition were in some sense a sign of some accidental defect in man's nature, or rather a falling-away from an originally harmonious condition. From this point of view mediation of any kind would be nothing more than a return to primitive unity. We are faced with this two-sided attitude of Marx towards the problem of

[9] We shall be forced to retract something of what we here attribute to Marx by way of a formulation of the ultimate question about reality. On the doctrinal inadequacies of Marxism as a total world system, see Calvez, S. J. Y.-M., *La Pensee de Karl Marx* (Paris: Editions du seuil, 1956) *6f!5-628,* where the anti-metaphysical bias of Marxism is contrasted with Marx's inability to escape metaphysical constructions of his own. Father Felix Morlion, 0. P. once remarked to me that he had found only two pages of metaphysics in all the works of Marx. The statement may be an exaggeration, but see the statement of I. M. Bochenski, *Contemporary European Philosophy* (University of California Press, 1956) 70-1.

[10] Examples of such passages are to be found in *Capital,* I, 319-21; *Economic tLnd Philosophic of 1844,* 28-30; 61-62, and the entire essay on "Estranged Labor," 67-83.

man's relationship to nature, and we are unable completely to resolve it because Marx himself preferred to maintain both viewpoints or was at any rate unwilling to abandon one in favor of the other. This apparent inconsistency still plagues those students of Marx who expect to find his doctrine free in every respect of dark and obscure areas and shining brilliantly in the pure light of sheer reasonableness. There is no question of trying to force Marx into a position more logical and thus more tractable than the one he ultimately assumed. Due reservation must be expressed of this flaw in Marxism, but for the present it is possible and advisable to interpret Marx in what may be called a favorable sense, allowing at least that he knew what he was saying and said, in truth, the only thing he could say.

One of the most obvious and important ways in which man is related to nature is through the experience of needs which only nature can satisfy. Need fairly constitutes man's condition as related to nature: the latter comprises all the wealth and resources which man absolutely requires if he is to maintain life and acquire his perfect stature. Man's truest definition, for Marx, is that he is a "being in need"; man is part of nature and yet he is somehow distinct from and facing nature. He lacks everything except the capacity to be perfected by natural forces, and this makes him different from everything else in the world of nature. The recognition of this boundless destitution is the very beginning of wisdom: need, as proper and essential to man, turns him towards nature as something other than and opposed to him (as possessing what he lacks), and yet as also making possible the satisfaction of his every need.

This basic duality between man and nature is one of real, immediate opposition, but it may also be conceived, in Hegelian terminology, as a radical *objectification:* man as a subject, as a being in need, faces himself as an object, i.e., nature, as the objective source of his need-satisfaction. Thus man, himself wholly a being of nature, from, of, in, and for the natural world (the only world), exists or is impelled outside of himself as a subject, and this emphasizes his distinctness from the rest of

nature. The duality and ambivalence in man is even more profound and more far-reaching, since man is soul and body, spirit and flesh: everything distinct from his own interior, mental life is set over against and opposed to him, "objectified" and thus foreign to him. Man is indeed, and this realization cuts into the very heart of the whole problem of human life and human alienation, a being essentially capable of objectification. It is not extravagant to say that man's true nature exists outside of himself, so that human perfection is achieved only by man's entering into fruitful, profitable relationship to nature, thereby regaining for himself what is properly his. We must add at once, however, that this intrinsic duality is not one-sided: it is reciprocal in that nature itself must be brought to its highest development through man's conscious efforts. In the section following this one we shall present Marx's description of the processes of mediation by which the opposition between man and nature is bridged. But first, a brief sketch of the Marxist theory of knowledge will illustrate forcibly the doctrine of man's dependence on the objective world of nature. [11]

Engels states emphatically that" The great basic question of all philosophy, especially of modern philosophy, is that concerning the relations of thinking and being." Throughout the centuries philosophers have offered many solutions to this problem, but Engels contends that such a discussion has always resolved itself into the question: which is primary, spirit or nature? "The answer which the philosopher gave to this question split them into the two great camps. Those who asserted the primacy of spirit to nature, and, therefore, in the last instance, assumed world creation in some form or other ... comprised the camp of idealism. The others, who regarded

[11] On man as a being in need, see Marx's early work, "Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law," in Marx and Engels *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. by Lewis S. Feuer (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1959) 262-6. For a careful analysis of Marx's transformation of the Hegelian doctrine of objectification, see essay, "The Dilemmas in Communist Ideology," by Cornelio Fabro, C. P. S., in the collection *The Philosophy of Communism* (New York, Fordham University Press, 1950) 206-11.

nature as primary, belong to the various schools of materialism. These two expressions, idealism and materialism, primarily signify nothing more than this." Marx's philosophy obviously falls among what Engels calls the schools of materialism, and yet he insists on a distinction between thought and matter: "That thought and matter are 'real,' that they exist, is true. But to call thought material is to take an erroneous step." And again, "That the conception of matter must also include 'thoughts ' . . . is a confusion, for once such an inclusion is made, the epistemological distinction between mind and matter, materialism and idealism has no meaning." [12]

But this does not mean that matter and mind are two different kinds of reality; the distinction merely indicates which is primary, matter or mind. The primacy of matter and the objectivity of knowledge and of its faithful conformity to the sensibly given are thus correlative. Yet the mind is not a merely passive recipient of impressions derived from external reality. In his first thesis on Feuerbach Marx contends that the old materialist idea that sensation is nothing but the action of external reality on the senses is to be rejected. He upholds the mind as an essentially active power in the knowledge-process: "The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism ... is that the object, reality, sensuousness that is, activity of the senses, is conceived only in the form of object ... but not as human sensuous activity, practice, not subjectively." [13] Finally, although thought itself is immediately a product of the brain, the material or object of thought is drawn from the external world. In opposition to idealism, dialectical materialism emphasizes that knowledge does not have a purely subjective source; in opposition to the old materialism it contends that the mind plays an active role in the acquisition of knowledge.

Marxism opposes any theory which would have man arrive at knowledge automatically through sensation or without strenuous mental effort. From this point of view alone knowledge might be called the result of a dialectic or interaction

[12] *Ludwig Feuerbach,* in MESW, II, *365-6.*
[13] *Theses on Feuerbach,* in MESW, II, 402.

between mind and external reality. But it is not simply in virtue of this interaction that we may regard Marx's theory of knowledge as truly dialectical in his sense of the w'ord. For purely speculative knowledge, the abstract and detached contemplation of reality, does not engage man vitally and fruitfully with the world of nature: it isolates him, in fact, and leaves his deepest needs unsatisfied, his misery unrelieved, his utmost potentialities unactualized. This point leads to the doctrine of the ways and means by which the opposition between man and nature is mediated. [14]

2. J.lf*ediation between man and nature*

a. *Labor and mediation*

It is impossible to overemphasize the importance of the Marxist doctrine of the activist, dynamic character of knowledge for the over-all theory of the dialectical fulfillment of man in nature. When Marxism speaks of the unity of thought and action, the intention is to stress the necessity of thought's overflowing into action: man can never merely know an object, because he does not really know it until he does something about it. In the very act of knowing an interaction takes place between man and nature, by which man is changed and at the same time utilizes his knowledge to transform the world around him. Marxism sees no possible value in any knowledge which does not culminate in progressive action upon material reality. Marx sums up his outlook thus. "The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a practical question. In practice man must prove the truth, that is, the reality and power, the 'this-sidedness' of his thinking. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which is isolated from

" Carew-Hunt points out that it was from Feuerbach that Marx derived the seminal idea that all of man's activity has its root in his material needs; see Carew-Hunt, R.N., *Marxism: Past and Present* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1955) 29; also his *The Theory and Practice of Communism* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1951) 29-82.

practice is a purely scholastic question." [15] The ultimate criterion of truth is practice which is to be regarded as the source, the object, and the final acid test of the certainty and reliability of all knowledge. This is not to identify Marxism with pragmatism, although both propose practice as the final standard of truth. Pragmatism is often idealist and is very little concerned about the source of knowledge, whereas Marxism insists that knowledge is derived from a real, objective world. Finally, Marx regards man's knowledge as relative, for the most part, but admits that man has grasped truths absolutely and completely in some instances, although very rarely. The relative character of knowledge means that it is always limited and conditioned by a particular age, and not that what is true today may be false tomorrow. [16]

The Marxist doctrine of knowledge involves four consequences which are germane to the problem of the unity of man: 1) It denies the spirituality of soul or mind-the mind is only a function of the brain, matter specially organized. 2) It teaches that the mind can and does know objective reality, conditioned by the dialectical character of nature and the degree of development of scientific research. 3) It offers objective practice as the ultimate criterion of truth. 4) It holds that all true knowledge is inseparably united to action. It is with these last two points that we are particularly concerned as indicative of the way in which the opposition between man and nature is mediated. For Marx the most fundamental mediation is *labor*, man's active transformation of nature to suit his own desires and meet his own needs. By labor he means not merely the actual expenditure of productive energy but the whole complex of productive activities and relations within the social framework of a given culture or civilization. Labor is as basic as the opposition it overcomes, so that we may even define man

[15] *Theses on Feuerbach,* in MESW, II, 403; this is a quotation from Thesis III.

[16] Cornforth, Maurice, *The Theory of Knowledge,* New York, International Publishers, 1955: a good, clear, rather simplified expository study (by a Marxist) of the pragmatist character of Marx's philosophy; see especially the chapter, "Truth and Freedom," 151 ff.

as a being capable of work, as *homo faber.* The unity of knowledge and practice does not mean that the two are always in harmony; it implies that there is a necessary harmony between them, and that when they are not in agreement the reason is to be found in the practical field.[17]

Since the opposition between man and nature can never be completely reconciled, labor has no limit, it constitutes man's essential lot throughout time and history. It is labor, in fact, which lends structure and coherence to human life, which would otherwise be radically decomposed, and, if the opposition were not at all effectively overcome, dissolved into chaos. Considered apart from man, absolutely and in itself, nature is, as far as man is concerned, non-existent and unintelligible. Man himself, similarly isolated from nature, would cease to exist: he is, Marx tells us, wholly a *Naturwesen/* [8] both actively and passively. Actively, insofar as he tends to realize himself through activity on natural forces, and passively, insofar as he is receptive to physical and psychological impressions from the world around him. Hunger, for example, is a concrete, natural need. It demands a nature outside of man, an object other than man to satisfy it. Hunger is thus the objective need of man for what is extrinsic to him, indispensable for his integration and for the outward projection of his own nature. In this case it is evident that man is not only active with regard to nature but is, even more frequently, passive.

But Marx carries his analysis a step further. After having shown us man as a creature of nature *(Naturwesen),* he considers the proper characteristic of man as human, a specific type of natural being, *menschliches Naturwesen.* This is the

[17] The most extensive and detailed account of the historical significance of labor in overcoming the distinction of thought and nature is provided by Engels in his *Dialectics of Nature,* I, 228-46, and by Marx-Engels in the *German Ideology,* in Feuer, *op. cit.,* 247-60. The Moscow edition of the latter work has been exhausted and it was not possible to consult another edition of comparable authority.

[18] For the meaning of this word and the senses in which Marx uses it, see the Translator's Note on Terminology in the Moscow edition of the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,* 12-8; in the work itself consult particularly 68-71, 80-4.

very heart of :Marx's concept in its most constructive originality, a consideration which is decisive in our view of man the subject. Neither nature-objectively nor subjective-nature is immediately present in *human* nature in an adequate way. Human nature is perfectly attuned to objective reality not merely by personal, individual labor, but by labor that is both social and historical. In a moment we shall analyze these twin aspects of man's mediatory activity, but let us reflect briefly on the scope and significance of Marx's central insight.

In his view of labor, social and historical, as the essential means of overcoming the gulf which separates man from the rest of nature, Marx has discovered the methodological nucleus of all his subsequent philosophical construction. He remarks that, after having recognized the nature of human labor in "extrinsic projection" or alienation, Hegel went no further, conceiving that the true nature of man is self-consciousness, instead of seeing man's real essence in his dynamic and mutual interrelationship of activity and passivity with the objects of nature. Hegelian becoming or process, J\iarx observes, must also have a subject which undergoes the process, but for Hegel the subject can only be the *result* of the process. This subject is absolute absolute Spirit, Idea, or God! This is pure mystification, in which real man and real nature are reduced to mere predicates, transitory and ephemeral, no more than symbols of that mysterious and hidden man and nature which are ideal and not real! All real subjects become predicates (of the unique subject-Absolute· Spirit) and all their actual concreteness vanishes in an empty abstraction of the totality of absolute Spirit. To Hegel, then, the core problem of human labor remains unanswered: it is a mere alienation, an objectification like any other, without any intrinsic requirement. For 1\farx, on the contrary, there is a deep significance in labor for it is the means by which alienation is overcome and transfigured and by which eventually a cond{tion of life will be achieved in which there will no longer be exploited or exploiters. But this is getting ahead of the subject.

Marx has many fine passages in his works describing the vital nature of human labor and tracing the changes which have been brought about in the forms of labor by the course of history.[19] The most primitive type of labor answered man's most pressing and unrefined needs, and must have consisted in nothing more complicated than picking the fruits of nature just as they were, ready to be used. Even this simple activity already bridges the gap between man and his environment. This activity, of taking from nature what he requires or desires, will continue as long as man's existence on earth, through every possible evolution of forms of civilization and social life. At the present time (under capitalism) labor has reached the highest stage it has ever known, immeasurably more efficient and elaborate than under primitive conditions, and the end to progress is nowhere in sight. Man stands over against the whole of nature; labor will forever be his most persistent need or rather his most essential characteristic, because he will never completely adapt the resources of nature to his needs, which are *universal.* The animal provides only for its own extremely limited needs, reproduces only itself, but man turns his efforts to the whole of nature, freely and consciously concentrating his energy on the exploitation of every available natural force. The animal acts only to satisfy the needs of its own particular species, whereas man can, by his labor, respond to needs of any species, and, further, applies to his work a measure which is immanent to it-the measure of reasoning, understanding, and deliberation.

Labor is not only man's most proper enterprise, but the results or effects of labor-the things produced-already preexist in the mind and imagination of the worker. This means that the worker not only transforms external matter but, in this very transformation, he realizes his own conscious purposes and expresses his dominance over matter. This aspect of labor is

[19] Such passages are scattered through the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscript3* and in *Capital,* I, 169-77, where Marx explains what he means by and includes under the term "labor."

preserved even when man uses tools and machines, for these instruments are also fashioned from materials extracted from nature by labor, to help man to meet his needs more easily and more efficiently. In fact, machines are more completely "abstracted" from nature than the materials which man consumes more or less immediately. They are more perfectly adapted to human nature because they are more intimately related to man's reasoning powers, his wholly abstract instruments of production. Through the use of machines, therefore, thinking and labor are closely connected. Man shapes and modifies materials distinct from himself into extensions of his own labor power-he impresses them with the stamp of his own nature. Hence the extreme importance of the instruments and means of production, of machines in general: they are the most accurate and revealing indicatives of a given civilization (much better for this purpose than, for example, potte:r;y, which is "less human ") . In labor there is both an objectification of man and a humanization of objective reality; this mediatory activity is the very foundation of human existence and civilization. Mediation is continued in every area of human endeavor, in law and politics, scientific research and social reform, even in art and recreation. In art, for instance, there is a remarkably profound identity of man's concepts and the immanent laws of nature: in "imitating nature," art reveals to man nature's own innermost struggle. [20]

b. *Society as most perfect mediation*

The mediation through labor goes on in every age and under every type of social organization. The most perfect form of mediation is to be found in social life itself, which is the normal framework within which all other attempts at mediation are made. Through labor and his other activities man confronts and humanizes all the forces of nature until finally there remains nothing objective to and distinct from himself except

[20] Labor as man's characteristic trait is described in the *German Ideology,* in Feuer, *op. cit.,* 247-9.

man himself recognized as such. At first, of course, man is aware only of the external appearances, the outward and superficial qualities of his fellow-man. Gradually he comes to realize that "his complete self-actualization depends on his relationship to other men, with whom he must enter into dialectical intercourse. It is not man alone, as individual, who exploits the resources of nature, but all men together, cooperating with each other and each contributing his share to the building up of society. Therein all find their true selves, for they are wholly reconciled to objective reality-to nature and to the others of their race. This is the perfect mediation, but it must be worked out and developed in the course of history. The important point is that production, the fundamental fact of man's real existence, constitutes the foundation not only of his individual, but also of his social, life.

Social life is, therefore, as essential to man as production, and not because of his individual needs. It is with a view to production that men establish themselves in society. The first step in this respect is taken in the relationship of man to woman, but this is only a first step because in a sense it is only a further aspect of man's attitude to nature. Family life represents the fulfillment of reciprocal need of the same general order as man's other interrelations with nature. It forms a basic and intermediate stage between a state of nature and a more complex and artificial type of social life. In the more developed forms of social life the recognition of man as such, in his genuine humanity, comes to depend less and less on nature and more on the objective effects of production. But man's intercourse with man will never divorce itself completely from external media; there will always be the objectification of, for example, language. Through labor, social labor and all this implies, the opposition between man and nature and between man and man is gradually overcome. [21]

[21] The origin of human society in cooperation for purposes of production is recounted in Engels' *Dialectics of Nature,* 116-36. See also Marx's *Theses on Feuerbach,* Theses VI and VIII, in MESW, II, 403, 404.

c. *History as the totality of mediations*

1) *The dialectics of historical alienation*

It is now possible to view the historical process as the working out of the dialectic between man and nature and, in society, man and man, which results from the dynamism implicit in the fundamental mediation of labor. History is nothing but the totality of such mediation and the development of the forms of mediation is the history of civilization. Since mediation continues indefinitely, the basic and most immediate relationships are primitive in the sense that they logically condition the others rather than that they are chronologically presupposed by these others. We cannot, indeed, determine with minute precision the course of development of successive manifestations of the relations of mediation, because we cannot grasp the totality of history. What we understand is the intelligible structure and meaning of the history of mediation, which is expressed in the proposition that it is man who actively undertakes his own reconciliation with nature and his fellow man, according to the laws of the dialectic. It is at this point that Marx lays the final groundwork of his system which leads ultimately to the complete doctrine of historical materialism.

To a considerable extent Marx has already explained alienation, in the light of his own first principles. The radical duality at the heart of nature and of history (man's distinctness from the rest of nature and that of men from each other, respectively) accounts at least for the possibility of alienation. Marx at times claims that he has explained even the fact and the necessity of alienation. The most outstanding instance of this is Marx's analysis of commodity and value, for this is the point at which the basic and universal duality in being emerges on the economic level. Briefly, this is what happens: working on nature, man fashions a product capable of satisfying his own qualitative needs. He also thereby objectifies himself in his product and, with respect to all other men, becomes objective, set over against them. In this way, because his product is

social, man can be recognized by others in what his labor has brought about. Through the exchange of commodities a specific type of society, namely, the economic, is born. The vehicle of economic life is the *commodity,* a product apt for exchange. As such it has a universal, social value and not only the specific personal and psychological value it had for the individual who produced it. Every such product has both 1) use value, which as unique and specific, cannot be compared directly with any other use value because it satisfies a particular need but cannot satisfy other needs, and 2) exchange value, value simply, which constitutes what is meant by a commodity, a certain quantity of human sensuous reality which imparts its value to it and can be expressed in terms of money.[22]

The mediation of these two distinct types of value is itself twofold: there is a mediation which consists in human labor, man's productive activity, which is both specific (like use value), in that the worker makes the product, and social (like exchange value), because it is capable of substitution-it can be sold at a price and can also be performed by others. Because of this dialectical character of labor, it is possible to separate use value from exchange value, and herein, at this precise point, lies the possibility of economic alienation. The inherent duality in commodities, their contradictory component characteristics (private-social), make possible the development of this alienation and the appearance of recurrent crises of overproduction and unemployment. The circulation or distribution of a commodity, a universal property of commodities as such, is common to every stage and mode of production, from the most primitive to the most advanced (Marx denies this in his later works).[23] Marx concludes, therefore, that the possibility of alienation is inseparable from the very nature and being of economic life.

With these assumptions Marx comes very close to explaining

•• On the alienation of man in economic life through the placing of labor as a commodity on the market, see *Capital,* I, 167-98 (chapters 6 and 7). The various definitions of the types of value are in chapter 1, sections 1 to 8, I, 35-70.

•• For such a reversal of position, see Marx's *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875), in MESW, II,

adequately the alienation which takes place under capitalism. He does not go further here, although he seems to be aware that he has accounted for the possibility and no more than that. In order to demonstrate the *necessity* of alienation, he must discover further elements in socio-economic life. He is eventually compelled to elaborate dialectical materialism in a monistic fashion, in a way which we shall not be able to describe in this paper. The possibility b'ecomes an historical reality when human labor, which increases the value of commodities, is placed on the market and dealt with like any other commodity. Marx is here confused and hesitant in the face of an ambiguity in this basic doctrine of dialectical materialism: he wants to maintain both the opposition and the unity between man and nature (the physical universe and other men), but he is forced to contradict in one place what he says in another. He is inclined to consider the primary constituents of being and history as the relationship of opposition and the indefinite means of mediating this opposition, through labor and the social process of civilization. But on closer examination Marx seems to insist that unity or identity is more basic than opposition-that man is fundamentally one with and a part of nature-and that mediation is only the re-establishment of a radical and primary identity. On this second hypothesis, it becomes increasingly difficult to account for the inevitability of alienation, except through an extreme oversimplification of historical facts and analytical interpretation. It becomes much easier, on the other hand, to promise, if not to achieve, an eventual reconciliation of oppositions should they arise.[24]

2) *The historical intervention of labor*

The historical intervention of labor, by which the opposition between man and nature is overcome, involves an application to man's condition, to what is most properly human, of the

•• The difficulties of maintaining both the identity of man with nature and a radical opposition between the two (under capitalism) are recognized even as early as the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844, in the essay entitled "Estranged Labor," 67-83.

dialectics of nature and completes the doctrine of dialectical materialism. It also serves as the link between this phase of Marxist philosophy and the historical materialism in which the whole is terminated. At this point we may reflect on the constituent elements in Marx's basic theory of man's opposition to and mediation of nature. The three essential elements are, we have seen, a) need and satisfaction, b) objectification, and c) work-in the order of logical analysis. A review of the implications of each of these factors for the historical character of man's relation to nature will provide a concise picture of the dialectics of matter and suggest further lines of inquiry which we may keep in mind for our critical evaluation of Marx's concept of the nature of man.

a) *Need and satisfaction.* Man's needs reveal him to be facing nature and opposed to it. Yet Marx insists even more strongly that man is a being of nature, bound to it through these same intimate ties of his sensible needs. Marx says that man is passive, limited, and dependent, just as the plants and the other animals. The objects of man's thinking exist outside of him; in seeking to know them man manifests and confirms his own energies. This is precisely what is meant by saying that man is an objective, corporeal being with natural powers: that he has, as the objects and media of exercising his vital forces, real, sensible existents. Man is immersed in and inseparable from nature precisely because he is capable of and compelled to objectification. This does not imply, however, that man is simply to be identified with nature: the very fact of need means, for Marx, that there is a certain opposition between nature and man. Marxists always strive to maintain some sort of discontinuity between man and the rest of nature. [25]

But the same difficulty arises out of Feuerbach's anxious merging of man with his environment: [26] if unity between man

•• Thus Cornforth, *op. eit.,* in a chapter headed, somewhat misleadingly, "Mind as Product and Reflection of Matter."

•• A difficulty to which Engels devotes considerable attention, *Anti-Duhring,* Part I, ch. 8, 53-61; see Cornforth's comment, *op. eit.,* 50 f.

and nature is basic, if his needs bind man to and turn him towards nature, then how is alienation to be explained? How does nature become hostile and opposed to man? In reply, l\1:arxtries not so much to·discover the causes which bring about alienation as to decribe what happens to need in alienated man. He assumes private property as the ultimate reason for alienation, exploiting human need, victimizing man and depriving him of the real, immediate satisfaction of his needs. Instead of specific, qualitative need for some real object, it becomes a woefully impersonal need, a desperate urge for bare subsistence, mere survival, on the part of the proletarian; while for the capitalist it degenerates into an abstract, unreal need for money. Thus need can be prostituted because it becomes something wholly foreign to the victim's real nature when he falls into the trap of private property. [27]

b) *Objectification.* Marx's argument becomes not a little ambiguous and confusing when he attempts to analyze more precisely the subject-object relationships. The difficulty is to a great extent inherited from the vagueness and complexness of Hegel's own doctrine. On the one hand he emphasizes that man is an objective being, that his proper mode of existence is in contact with the real, natural world. Incidentally, Marx almost never talks about "matter" or the material universe as such, so that he escapes the appearance of materialist in the gross and obvious sense. For him the whole discussion proceeds in the context of "nature," the world of sensible objects, of familiar experience. Marx would regard a being completely isolated from and unrelated to nature-a "non-objective being "-as a non-being, a monstrous absurdity. For this reason he is forced to deny, as a complete contradiction, the existence of a purely spiritual being, independent of material, sensible reality. But on this very point it becomes difficult to account for the fact

[27] In an important sense, once again, Marx has inherited the antinomies inherent in Hegelian thought, which allows the co-existence of contradictions in reality. For this element in Hegelianism, see Findlay, J. M., *Hegd: A Re-Examination* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1958) *25-6,* 63-6. On need as the driving force behind the intervention of labor, see Engels' *Origin of the Family, 5.*

of subjective alienation: if the mode of being proper to the subject is to be in contact with and turned towards objectivity, how can such a being isolate himself and construct. his own illusory world? To find even a plausible answer to this question Marx must make strenuous use of the dialectiq and bring in the issue, itself unresolved, of the inherent contradictions in all of reality. [28]

c) *Work.* There are numerous passages in 1\'Iarx's works, especially in *Capital,* which extol labor as man's noblest activity and describe glowingly, and sometimes beautifully, the role of labor in social life and in the building up of civilization. [29] In the the problem of labor as alienation (under capitalism) is developed from the strictly formal point of view and its speculative implications are worked out. Labor worthy of man is "the practical production of a world of objects"; the elaboration of the resources of nature for man's own use, thus preserving man as a specifically conscious natural being. The effect of man's labor, Marx adds, is the objectification of man's own proper life, insofar as he thereby reproduces himself actively in his products, and may thereafter contemplate himself in a world formed by him. Thus does he rise above the animals that remain slaves of nature-homo *faber!* And yet, throughout Marx's treatment of man as producer we behold the spectacle of man as just another purely natural being. He is, after all, the product of the inner dialectic of nature, of nature's dialogue with itself. In general Marx does conceive of labor as

[28] Marx's interpretation of the materialist position is outlined in another of Cornforth's works, *Materialism and the Dialectical Method* (New York: International Publishers, 2nd rev. ed., 1960) chapter 4: "From Mechanistic to Dialectical Materialism," 39-46. It should be noted, incidentally, that most of Cornforth's quotations here are from Engels.

[29] Such passages are scattered throughout *Capital,* in which Marx sometimes interrupts dry, technical analyses of fiscal and industrial processes and lyricizes over the humane aspects of labor; see, e. g., in Vol. I, Part II, Chapter VII, sect. **1,** 177-185; Part IV, Chapter XIV, sect. 4, 350-358; and Part V, Chapter XVII, sect, 3, 526-7. The most forceful and closely argued statement is the essay on "Estranged Labor *"-Die Entfremdete Arbeit-in* the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,* 67-83.

a unique and distinctive undertaking, but at times, and not infrequently, he creates the unmistakable impression that man is, in his attitude towards nature, not significantly different from any other animal. We only conclude that there are several knotty and obscure problems in Marx's dialectic of man's historical intervention through labor in the world of material reality. The original question receives no clear and decisive answer: which is really Marx's primary emphasis, man's opposition to and uniqueness in nature, or his unity with nature? And if we cannot adequately solve this dilemma, should we entertain any hope of answering our immediate question as to the unity of man himself?

II. *A Thomistic Appraisal of Marx's Concept of Man*

A. *Limits of a Thomistic Critique*

1. *Methodological limits*

For the purposes of this appraisal we shall take as our measure or standard of comparison the doctrine of the unity of man set forth by St. Thomas Aquinas in various places in his writings.[30] The Thomistic concept of the unity of man, although based on physical and psychological analyses, is essentially a metaphysical one. It accounts for and explains man's unity in terms of his very being, through an analysis of the constituent elements or "parts" of his being in their ontological interrelationship. It is important to keep this in mind in undertaking an appraisal of Marx's doctrine on this point. To be perfectly consistent and fair, we should compare the Marxist with the Thomistic positions at each and every stage of the development of St. Thomas' thought. Marxism itself, however, both in its approach or method of handling the

[80] The clearest exposition of St. Thomas' teaching on this point is in the Disputed Questions, *De Anima*, art. 1, "Whether the (human) soul can be both *hoc aliquid* lllld the form of the body," and art. 2, "Whether the human soul is separated from the body according to *esse."* Parallel passages include *S. T.* I, q. 75, a. 2, "Whether the human soul is something subsistent," and the whole of q. 76, on the union of soul and body; also *S.C. G.* II, c. 70, on the same question.

problem and in the actual solution it proposes, precludes such a point by point comparison. We discover that this is so, quite to our dismay, only after we have searched the texts of Marx and found them so utterly different in many ways from those of St. Thomas. It is this discovery that makes us aware of the limits, methodological as well as doctrinal, which impose themselves on an attempt to criticize Marxism on the basis of Thomistic principles. A brief exposition of these limits is not only a pre-requisite to an intelligible criticism but will in itself throw considerable light on the criticism as we conceive it.

Marx writes as one who is consciously and deliberately, as well as in fact, outside of the great and centuries' old Western philosophical tradition. There is not time here to spell out all the ways in which Marx departs from the general line of speculation more or less characteristic of this tradition; his most glaring and far reaching divergence, and the one most significant for us in view of the problem we are considering, is his complete lack of interest in questions of metaphysics. In substantiating this accusation great pains must be taken to state the case exactly as it stands, noting the pertinent qualifications and reservations. Armed with the Thomistic doctrine of being and its application to the problem of the unity of man, we address ourselves to the task of comparing the Thomistic concept of human existence with that of Marxist metaphysics. The Thomist is bewildered to find, in place of a metaphysics of man-however deficient-no metaphysics at all, but instead an astonishing essay involving the history and sociology of economic relations. Where is Marx's theory of the human composite, what does he hold with respect to substance, nature, potency and act, *esse?* To these questions Descartes would gladly furnish an answer, so would Hume, so too would Hegel. From Marx comes only a strange, provocative silence, but a silence from the depths of which the heart of Marxism plainly cries out.

The Thomist begins to realize that he must make the best of the situation; he must take Marx as he finds him. If Marx did

not put to himself the same questions asked by St. Thomas, then no one should expect to find answers which could be strictly compared with those proper to the questions raised by St. Thomas.[31] That Marx should have asked these questions is another thing again; we maintain that his failure in this regard leaves his doctrine of man incomplete and inadequate. But this line of criticism we shall introduce later, in its place: at present we wish only to call attention to Marx's distinterest in the metaphysics of man and to set this down as limiting our criticism from the outset. This absence of metaphysics does not, however, preclude a Thomistic appraisal of Marxism: there is in Marx a very definite and well-developed concept of man, including, at least by implication, a view of man's unity.

2. *Doctrinal limits*

Marx is an excellent example of the philosopher caught in the dilemma of wanting to do away entirely with metaphysical preoccupations, on the one hand, and yet unwilling to surrender himself to a downright positivism, on the other. Marx wants to retain and bring to its highest peak of development a dialectics of nature and of human history, to replace by transcending the abstract, idealist dialectics of Hegel. To this end Marx begins by subjecting the existing world, as he found it, to a thoroughgoing criticism, exposing its weaknesses and contradictions in every area and tracing them to their root cause in the case of human estrangemertt or alienation.[32] He follows this severe critique (a" critique to end all critiques") with a philosophical

[31] The fact of the matter seems to call for an attitude which avoids both the mistaken expectancy signalized here and the flat assertion that Marxism is essentially a propagandist *tour de force* and no theoretical system at all. For the latter view, see W. W. Rostow, "The Priority of Power," in *The Dyna·rnics of Soviet Society* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1952) 7-11, and the essay "Marxism: Philosophy or Ideology?" by Jeremiah Newman, in his *A Time for Truth* (Dublin: Browne and Nolan, Ltd., 1955) 142-64.

[32] Every one of Marx's major works bears the word critique or critical in its title or sub-title. On the initially and fundamentally critical character of Marxism, see Calvez, *op. cit.*, 41-54, and the interesting historical reflections in Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx* (New York: The Humanities Press, 1958) 95, 130.

construct which has come to be called dialectical and historical materialism. It is within the framework of this sweeping vision of the past, present, and future of the physical universe, of which man is a part, that the Marxist concept of man and his unity is evolved and takes shape. We have roughed out only the broad features of this world view, and only for the purpose of situating Marx's position on the problem of man within its native doctrinal context. It is the boundaries to this same framework that will set the doctrinal limits to a Thomistic appraisal.

Marx has devoted himself to the study of social and economic history, in place of metaphysics and the psychology of man. If we are to judge ·Marxism on its own merits, we have no choice but to take up the doctrinal synthesis as Marx left it and to criticize precisely this from the standpoint of Thomism, which we are convinced is that of truth. In doing this, we shall be obliged to by-pass and largely ignore some of Marx's basic presuppositions and most of the practical or "revolutionary" corollaries which, in his own mind, surrounded his theory of man. The focal interest at present does not extend to Marxism in its full scope, even though the concept of man occupies a central and commanding position in this philosophy. It is for this reason that one is justified in leaving unchallenged even some of the points made and conclusions reached in the exposition of Marxist doctrine in the first part of this paper. And yet if the exposition of Marxism had been confined to just those aspects of it in which the nature and being of man are specifically in question, it should have failed in our very aim of revealing Marx's thought on these points and not touched what was in this thought most vital and most original.

In our appraisal we shall have nothing to say concerning the reality and forcefulness of the Marxist dialectics of nature or the intricacies of economic relations.[33] One is almost desperate

[33] The question of the authenticity and significance of a dialectics of nature in Marxism is extremely problematic, with equally competent students taking opposite sides. See the discussion, with references, in Wetter, *op. cit.*, 50-3,

for good clues to the mystery of man's being as it is resolved in Marxism, and this is why consideration must be given to more than what is absolutely relevant to the question of the nature and unity of man. The two key concepts in Marxist philosophy are those of the dialectic and materialism; enough time has been spent in defining these concepts and delineating their role in the Marxist discovery of man to refer to them again in our comparison of Marxism and Thomism. It should be abundantly clear to any student of St. Thomas, from reading the first part of this paper and even before any systematic reflection on the subject, that Marx's doctrine of man is located squarely in the center of his dialectics of nature and history and that the latter serves as the font and support of the former, just as St. Thomas grounds his doctrine of man on that of the metaphysics of substance, nature, and *esse.* Within these limits, of method and of content, the following points are offered by way of criticism. [34]

B. *The Disappearance of Man*

1. *The dissolution of human nature*

a. *Marx's naturalism*

Man is, for St. Thomas, a being of nature, at home in the physical world and himself essentially material. The Thomist will never retract this admission, whatever he may insist on saying further to clarify and complete his concept of man. Human nature includes, as one of its essential components, a body, matter organized to live at the vegetative and sensitive as well as the higher, purely immaterial levels. This nature is one, although it is not simple, because the soul is *per se* and immediately united to the body as substantial form to matter. Man is *what* he is in virtue of this union of spirit in matter;

The classical *locus* of the Marxist dialectic in nature is not in any of Marx's works, but in a work by Engels entitled *Dialectics of Nature.*

•• For an historical introduction to St. Thomas' teaching on this problem, see A. C. Pegis, *St. Thomas and the Problem of the Soul in the Thirteenth Century* (Toronto: Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1934) esp. pp. 77-120.

his nature is unique in this respect, but in its own order it is complete and self-sustaining. St. Thomas looks within man himself to discover the principles of human nature and he finds these principles constituting a single composite in which the matter serve_s the form and form actuates matter for its own (form's) perfection. The Thomistic insight into substance, plus the recognition of the substantial character of the rational soul, enable us to discover the unity of human nature within man himself and to explain it in intelligible terms. Man is a natural being but his nature has within itself an element which, because of its spirituality, transcends the material order and distinguishes him profoundly from every other species in nature.

Marxism, on the other hand, looks to forces and influences extrinsic to man to give an intelligible account of what man is and why he is that way. In one sense Marx does claim to set man apart, as something unique and different among natural things (p. 266 above). But even here there is no reference at all to the nature of man as man, and no admission that man and the universe as a whole depend in their very being on a God Whose perfections are reflected in and shared by the natures of finite, created things. Marx soon plunges into the most radical and unrelieved naturalism, because he has not discerned within man, in the spiritual character of human nature, what is distinctively human. There should be no mistake or delusion about Marx's use of terms such as" soul and body," and" spirit and flesh:" he cannot avoid them, without extremely awkward circumlocution; but they are to be read always in the context of his expressed and pervasive materialism. One is reminded in this, as in so many other instances, of Freud's difficulties, arising out of his attempt to describe immaterial realities and their interrelations out of a stifling conviction of materialism. Their very helplessness with the choice of language betrays the hopelessness of their position.

Marx's naturalism aims at a thorough rationalization of his basic and original presupposition, which is that man is nothing but a *Naturwesen.* To this end Marx submerges man first in

the totality of physical forces, then tries to disengage him in such a way and to such an exterit that he will be able to explain both alienation and the mediation by which it can and must be overcome. This is a type of environmentalism, more profound and more serious than that of psychological behaviorism, and indeed there is, beneath the gross error and degradation of man, a valid insight. Man is, in truth, a being-in-need: Marx has hit on the very essence of man's real ontological condition, but unfortunately Marx himself does not realize or understand the true significance of this discovery. Not only as a creat.ure, utterly contingent in the depths of his being (as we shall recall in the next section of this paper), but more specifically in his nature, man's indigence is, for St. Thomas, one of his most striking hallmarks. Man is situated, in the heirarchy of being, at the lowest level of intellectual creatures, so imperfect and needy in the order of knowledge, that his intellect, his spirit, requires to be united with matter for its (the intellect's) own good. Man's most natural and most pressing need is this, the need to acquire, by arduous and continuous effort, the intellectual perfection proper to his nature. In this St. Thomas sees the most precise revelation of man's nature: both its glory and its poverty, but it is this that makes man what he is, a spirit-in-need-of-matter.

Marx thinks that he can discover man through an analysis of his needs, which direct him out of himself (where, according to :Marx, previous to his communion with nature through "objectification," he really is nothing at all, a purely "subjective" phantom, in the Hegelian idealist sense) and bring about his self-fulfillment through social, historically conditioned labor. A Thomist can be quite sympathetic with this view of man, even while he insists on correcting it where it is in error and filling up what is wanting to it where it is only partial and incomplete. It is a question of 1) what is meant by "objectification," and 2) what this actually reveals of the nature of man.

As to the first, we are obliged to point out to the Marxist

that man's natural activities, the operations through which he gradually achieves a measure of human stature and perfection (man never stops growing up, in this sense), spring from and manifest inner principles which constitute an original, natural endowment. Man is able to and does in fact act as he does because he is what he is; further, his manner of acting, the operations which are peculiarly his, these differ fundamentally from the type of activity found in all other natural agents because man has an essentially different *nature* than theirs. Why Marx did or could not see this, one cannot pretend to know with certitude, but it is a safe conjecture that he was prevented by the radical materialism and naturalism which colored all of his thought. For St. Thomas, what is called "objectification" (a term which never lost for Marx, in spite of his vigorous protests to the contrary, its Hegelian connotation) is man's way of expressing his nature and of bringing to actualization the specifically human potentiaiities with which, in virtue of his rational soul, he is natively endowed. This is in sharp contrast to the Marxist concept of objectification, which regards it as the link between man and the forces of brute matter and as serving only to rescue man from annihilation in face of these same hostile forces. Where in the Marxist view is the special dignity and perfection of man? This brings us to our second question, .what does objectification reveal of man?

Among all of man's many and varied activities-and he is far and away the most versatile of this world's inhabitants-it is that of intellection and all that it involves (we are here considering man's intellectual "life" as made up of a number of distinct operations, not forgetting that these are " activities " in a sense only analogous to his other actions, physical and vital) that sets man apart from every other creature of our experience. Man lives most properly the life of reason and it is in order to enrich and develop this life that he does whatever else he does, when he is acting in conformity with his nature. For the Thomist, therefore, every type and instance of objectification, to retain the Marxist term, is some sort of revelation of

man's spiritual, intellectual nature. On all of his works, personal and social, man leaves the unmistakable stamp of reason: insofar as his activities bear this impress they reveal man's true and proper nature. His operations may be and are multiple and diversified, but they give evidence of the unity of his nature by the unity of their ultimate source and end, the rational power from which they receive their impetus as human and to which they contribute, each in its own way.

Marx's naturalism is the first cause of the dissolution of human nature, the first step in a series which terminates in the disappearance of man, whom Marx thought he had been the first in history to understand as he really is. Marxism allows no nature to man, actually, because it denies to him intrinsic and essential substantial co-principles and fails to recognize the spirituality of man and the intellectual character of his proper human activity. Marx is a kind of Freud-in-reverse, in the sense that, instead of searching with Freud the depths of unconsciousness within man, far below the level of reason and the light with which it shines in man's soul, Marx goes outside of man and wanders about among the forces of nature, seeking for an answer to the question, what is man, in the dynamics of man's relations with nature and with other men in society. There is no stable and distinctive point of unity for man's nature because, in the last analysis, there is no human nature as such.

b. *Marx's evolutionism*

No philosopher was, in the nineteenth century, more acutely conscious of the universality and impact of change in the world of man and of nature than Karl Marx. It would be interesting, perhaps, to analyze the causes of this strong sense of flux in Marx; for the present we can suggest three influences to which it may probably be traced: 1) Hegelianism, which is a thoroughgoing philosophy of development pervaded with a powerful historical spirit; 2) Darwinism, including the general nineteenth century scientific trend to explain all phenomena by the genetic method-Marx himself more than once acknowl-

edged his indebtedness to and admiration for the author of the *Origin of Species;* and 3) Marx's own original studies in and enthusiasm for the pre-Socratics, especially those who stressed the dynamic, ongoing character of reality. By combining elements from these three sources Marx formulated his own philosophy of dialectical materialism. What of the implications for his concept of the unity of human nature?

The remark with which we concluded the immediately preceding section may be repeated at this point, with the additional note that the nature of man disappears in the inexorable onrush of ever-changing physical reality. We are aware, of course, that evolutionism is no more exclusively a :Marxist attitude towards man than is naturalism or what may be called externalism. To plunge man into the moving stream of socio-economic relations is merely Marx's way of embracing an outlook which became increasingly more widespread as his century wore on. The result for man, i.e., the philosophical concept of man, is always pretty much the same: man has no nature, he has only a history; the present, or what man seems " to be," becomes intelligible *only* in terms of the past and the future. In other words, the being of man is dissolved in his becoming; we might say that Marx sees in "nature," in the nature of any thing, including man, a principle of motion but not of rest!

There is in Marx's espousal of the dialectic a significance whose gravity and import, for our problem in particular, cannot be overemphasized. St. Thomas can and does wholeheartedly agree that change, motion of every kind, is the special and most proper characteristic of the type of being found in this material universe; nature is for him the inner ground of each thing's peculiar species of change and resistance to change. For this reason it is possible to construct, with the principles of Thomism, a true philosophy of nature, taking into account the very mutability of the world around us and of ourselves insofar as we belong to it. But for St. Thomas, whose deepest insight is a metaphysical one, even this sensible, changing universe is not ultimately intelligible except in terms of the stability and

consistency of being and the reasons and causes thereof. In other words, the Thomist rejects evolutionism as an adequate and final explanation of the reality that is human nature because the evolutionist concept of man loses this nature and abandons it to the never-ending swirl of change and motion. At the center of Marx's evolutionism, conditioning and calling for it, is his naturalistic materialism: the glorifying of matter and of man's intimacy with matter issues inevitably in a championing of the characteristics of the purely material as such, which are potency and all the imperfections this entails.

Marx goes so far as to say on several occasions that man has not as yet (i.e., before the advent of socialism or what we would call integral communism) realized his own true nature. [35] He looks to the future, to the necessary and determined course of historical progress, for the ushering in of the age of humanity. Man *is* not, as yet, but will be. Again, the idea of man's constructing his own personality, in the modern psychological sense of the word, is not at all foreign to the thought of St. Thomas. He has undertaken both to locate the possibility of such a dynamic self-education and to illustrate its realization in several areas of human activity. As to the first, the possibility, St. Thomas regards man as given by nature an intellect that is purely potential or " possible," as he calls it: if to be human means above all to be rational, then clearly man achieves his humanity-in whatever measure is assigned to him, as an individual-only through a lifetime of actualizing and perfecting the intellectual power *(potentia),* both in itself and in the control and direction it exercises over the entire range of powers which are subject to its dominion. As to the illustrations St. Thomas provides of the working out of this process, we may cite two that come readily to mind: first, the long and laborious enterprise of scientific inquiry in which man must engage in

[35] See in particular his essay "The]\leaning of Human Requirements where there is Private Property and Under Socialism," in the *Paris Manuscripts, 115-35.* The radically evolutionist and energeticist character of Marx's materialism with respect to human nature is discussed in E. I. Watkin, *Men and Tendencies* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1937) 266-8.

order to achieve some degree of perfection in the intellectual order, the order of understanding, and secondly, the moral ascesis, which continues throughout the entire life span of man, by which alone he can bring into full maturity the capacity for good with which his free will is endowed.[36] In both cases we see that the concept of man is a dynamic one, an insight into the progressively developing character of human nature and its originally potential and unactualized condition. Man, more than any other creature, hears the divine injunction: become what you are.

But Thomism is not an evolutionism, whereas Marxism is, and while Marx refuses to assign to man a fixed and abiding nature, St. Thomas refuses to admit the possibility or intelligibility of a human development that did not presuppose and continually refer to a nature already essentially constituted. The difference between these two positions, similar to each other in a superficial fashion, consists in the fact that St. Thomas roots his philosophy of man's successive self-realization in the ontological structure of his essence-complex, hylemorphic, a harmonious tension of spirit in matter, whereas Marx simply is blind to this demand. The key here, once again, is in Marx's failure to understand the substantial and intellectual dimensions of human nature, due in part to his preoccupation with external relations, with the satisfaction of material needs and the historical engagement of all that pertains to .human life and the human situation.

The core and center of human nature, the point of unity at the level of nature, is for St. Thomas the immediate and absolutely essential actualization of man's body or matter by his spiritual, intellectual soul. The fruit of this union is one

•• On the intellectual enterprise peculiar to man, and its dependence on the psychosomatic unity of human nature, see the magnificent tracts in *De Veritate*, on the office of the teacher, q. 11, and on superior and inferior reason, q. 15, as well as *S. T.* I-II, q. 57, aa. 1 and 2, on the perfection of the intellect through the acquisition and exercise of habits. The will likewise must be guided to and fixed firmly on the good proper to man through persevering and life-long self-discipline: see *S. T.* I-II, 61, *5,* on the stages of man's spiritual life in terms of the growth of virtue.

substance, undivided in itself and divided from all others. Marx does not see man at all in these terms, which are explicative of the oneness of human nature; he reduces the distinctively rational perfection of man to a level of practical problem-solving, the function of providing for man's needs; he seizes on the potential and therefore developmental aspects of the human condition and ignores their grounding in and ordering to what is unchanging, namely, the nature of man, essentially the same in every age and under all kinds of circumstances. Under the relentless pressure of the Marxist dialectic, naturalistic and evolutionist, human nature has been dissolved, and with it, of course, the unity of man in his nature. But the end is not yet.

2. *The fragmentation of man's being*

a. *The Marxist theory of knowledge*

We might justifiably be accused of treating Marx much too generously when we say that he asked the question, what is being? Marx himself would not thank us for the intended compliment: his repudiation of metaphysics and of all interest in problems of metaphysics was clear and vociferous enough. Still, it seems likely that we can and should bring our appraisal of the Marxist doctrine of man along and up to the realm of metaphysical consideration, and this for two reasons: In the first place, the failure of a philosopher or of one who proposes a total world-view to reach the level of metaphysical insight is in itself a fact of metaphysical significance and can only be judged from the vantage point of such insight. Secondly, Marx was, most probably involved in metaphysical questions in spite of himself and whether he realized it or not. If these two reasons, general and specific, are valid, then we may confidently pursue the critique of Marxism into the area of the unity of man's being, with the aim of judging the adequacy and reasonableness of Marx's doctrine on this point.

There is evidence that Marx deserves the charge which Gilson raises against the pre-Socratics, namely, that they

refused to ask questions about reality beyond the level of matter. [37] We have already indicated that the kingdom of the spirit was closed to Marx, who denied its very existence. Of God, infinite and all-perfect creator, the angels, the dependence of creatures in being on their author, the intimate operations of intellect and free will, there is no sign of understanding or appreciation in Marx. This blindness was a fatal and far-reaching handicap and accounts to a great extent for Marx's stopping short of an insight into the pure act of *esse:* recall St. Thomas' dictum that the metaphysical intuition occurs at the precise point where the judgment of separation recognizes that being as such is not necessarily either in matter or free from matter but can be in both ways. [38] In the light of Marx's premetaphysical primitivism we may begin to grasp the *raison d'etre* of his theory of knowledge; we may then go on and see in the deficiencies of this theory the key to his failure to account for the unity of man's being. Our intention may be clarified, perhaps, by re-statement: first we shall comment briefly on the principal features of Marx's theory of knowledge, and then we shall attempt to reflect on the implications of this theory for the concept of man's existential unity.

By way of protecting our analysis from accusations of attributing to Marx elements of a theory which he did not in fact elaborate, we frankly admit that the develppment of a theory

[37] Gilson, Etienne, *Elements of Christian Philosophy* (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1960) 93. The Marxist predilection for the pre-Socratic philosophers is notorious; referring to the theory of dialectical materialism, Engels writes: " This primitive, naive, yet intrinsically correct conception of the world was that of ancient Greek philosophy and was first clearly formulated by Heraclitus, etc.," *Anti-Duhring,* 33. See Herman Reith, C. S.C., "The Marxists Interpret the Pre-Socratics," *The New Scholasticism,* XXVII, No. 4, (Oct. 1953) 404-31.

[38] The key text is *In XII Libras Jietaphy.'ficorum,* Proemium, where St. Thomas designates the degree of immateriality proper to metaphysical knowledge: "Intelligibile enim et intellectum oportet proportionata esse, et unius generis, cum intellectus et intelligibile in actu sint unum. Ea vero sunt maxime a materia separata, quae non tantum a signata materia abstrahunt, 'sicut formae naturales in universali acceptae, de quibus tractat scientia naturalis,' sed omnino a materia sensibili. Et non solum secundum rationem, sicut mathematica, sed etiam secundum esse, sicut Deus et intelligentiae. Unde scientia, quae de istis rebus considerat, maxime videtur esse intellectualis, et aliarum princeps sive domina."

of knowledge on Marxist premises and the drawing out of its epistemological implications were left to Engels and Lenin.[39] The outstanding defect in this theory is its confusion of realism with what the Marxist insists on calling materialism. The error has been pointed out many times by critics of Marxism, but there are no signs that the correction has made the slightest impression or will have the least possible effect on the writing of Marxist treatises. The confusion involves the equating of a noetic realism with a materialist reductionism: Marxists proudly call themselves materialists when what they mean (and in this they might well take pride) is that they uphold the objectivity and realistic reference of the knowledge process. Having duly noted this strange substitution of terms-the reasons for which we have not time here to determine-we may pass on to compare :Marxist realism with its Thomistic counterpart, to see what is what with the two.

The clue to the Marxist espousal of noetic realism is to be found in the concern of Marx to transform knowledge into practice: it is a realism motivated by and subservient to a pragmatism. For JVIarx, as we have seen, knowledge must be *of* reality because he proposes to revolutionize man's condition by turning knowledge itself into a living criticism of reality. This is pragmatism, but with a difference: in the classical sense, pragmatism substitutes practice for truth-the sole concern is with achieving satisfactory results and the very possibility of obtaining a detached, speculative insight into the real is ignored where it is not denied. Pragmatism thus leads readily to scepticism and, in the moral order, to a cynicism which is very difficult to hold in check. Of this type of pragmatism the :Marxist declares himself not guilty: truth. was always a sionate concern of Marx's, but it was his conviction precisely

[39] Compare for example, the meagre and oblique references to this question in Marx's early work, the *Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts,* with Engels' long and carefully constructed *Anti-Duhring* (1885) and with Lenin's philosophical masterwork, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (1909)-two works which the eminent Soviet theoretician, V. V. Adoratsky, regards as "the supreme philosophical achievement of Marxism." See 'Vetter, *op. cit.,* 116.

that truth consists and is verified in practice. The reasoning behind this is not hard to reproduce. The very life and existence of man depend on and are maintained in objectification, which is labor socially and historically determined; knowledge, therefore, becomes humanly valid and valuable only when and in the measure that it contributes to this mediatory activity whereby man enters into fruitful communion with nature and his fellow man. The idealist view of knowledge, locking man within the confines of his own mental constructs, rendered impossible such a program of rational transformation of the real. Such at least was Marx's conviction and on this score he bases his rejection of Hegelianism.

In the Marxist theory of what knowledge is there are three essential points of opposition to the doctrine of St. Thomas: 1) the spiritual nature of intellection is denied, the primacy of contemplative knowledge is cast aside, and 3) the metaphysical import of intellectual knowledge is missed entirely. Tl).e last point relates to the implications of the Marxist theory of knowledge for the unity of man, and will be taken up in the section following this one. As to the first two points, they may be summed up by saying that Marxism is sensualist and pragmatist, whereas Thomism is spiritualist, without denying the material component in human knowing, ahd theoretical, without ignoring man's need to complement intellection with practical activity. These terms are fairly self-explanatory, but they designate only the bare essential characteristics of knowledge admitted in the two opposing philosophies. What is of much greater importance is for us to determine the respective concepts of man which underlie these antagonistic views, relating the sensualism and pragmatism of Marx to this ontological concept and deducing from this relationship the Marxist view of the unity of man's being.

b. *Consequences for the unity of man*

The problem of the unity of man is not fully determined by St. Thomas until he has worked through to the metaphysical bedrock of this unity. This ontological analysis is made possible

by and is carried out in terms of the Thomistic doctrine of *esse*, as applied to the structure of man's being. The being of man is absolutely one by reason of its single act of existing, an *esse* which belongs properly and per se to man's spiritual soul and which is communicated to his body so that it is, in fine, the one and only *esse* of the unified substance which is man. This insight is the fruit of St. Thomas' masterful, and ingeniously original, inquiry into the exigencies of a spiritual substance, which the human soul is. The starting-point of this investigation in the case of man is his intellectual activity, an operation which reveals the spiritual and therefore subsistent character of the rational soul which is its proper subject (this is not to deny that concretely it is man, and not the soul, that knows). The unity of human nature, also established through the analysis of the requirements of an intellectual substance that is also the substantial form of a body, is confirmed and merged in the unity of the human being as an existential reality.

When we turn to the implications of Marxism for the unity of man's being, to which we have alluded, we are once again disappointed at the poverty of metaphysical understanding and. judgment. Marx is completely absorbed in man's interrelationship with physical nature, and this preoccupation prevents his recognizing the true and spiritual nature of human intellection, which alone could lead him to see the principle of the unity of man in his being. At the center of Marx's attention in his reasoning on human nature is the activity of labor, and it is in his analysis of labor that Marx commits himself to a view of man which can never get to those causes which explain why man is one in being as well as in nature. The basic fault, as we have indicated, is Marx's failure to search within man himself for the intrinsic principles of action, and to see clearly what activity that is properly human actually involves. We know what intellection is, for St. Thomas, and how he is able, through his examination of the roots of intellection, to establish the unity of man. In place of intellection-primarily speculative and essentially spiritual-Marx proposes *labor,* practical and

material in object and in purpose, as man's most distinctive and valuable kind of activity.

For l\iarx man's conscious purpose, .the reason for and guarantee of his existence, is his domination over matter. This goal is to be more and more effectively realized, through the progressive improvement of techniques of production, or what would today be called technology; in fact the social order itself is brought into being and organized for the sole end of rendering more efficient and more productive the forces of labor present in mankind. Thus in the Marxist concept of labor the relationship of knowledge to external, physical activity is radically reversed: for St. Thomas, intellection, the grasping by the intellect of the perfection of the being of things, is an end in itself, and constitutes man's highest activity; all other actions, which as a whole comprise the " active life," are ordered to the supreme activity of intellectual possession and contemplation of truth. Thus the body is for and serves the needs of the soul; soul and body are united only in order to allow the human intellect to carry out its proper operations. Marx sees the case quite differently: knowledge has an ultimately practical purpose; man's cognitive powers have been evolved (in a Darwinian sense) with a view to his more complete and dynamic mastery .over nature. Man's material needs, which constitute the basis of his communion with nature, of which he is but a part, hold the primacy, so that man is no more than a fortunate animal. The intellectual power of man, whose true nature Marx has not perceived, is debased to the level of a mere instrument of physical, material satisfaction.

There is in Marxism no point of greater import for the concept of what man's nature and destiny are than the doctrine of labor and its presuppositions in the dialectics of nature. But Marx never gets beyond the consideration of what is, in fact, the external manifestation and expression of man's inner nature and being. It might have been possible to arrive at an understanding of the being of man by tracing human labor to its intellectual source, but Marx turns away from reflection of

the interior of man and concentrates exclusively on the dialectic of man, the producer, with his natural environment. In place of an inquiry into *esse* 1\1arx offers the usual modern surrogate, which is the alleged concentration on man in his "existential" conditions, which means in the details of his historically conditioned social and economic life. If we put the question of what man is and in what does his unity ultimately consist, directly and forthrightly to Marxism, we have no hope whatever of receiving a firm reply in terms of the nature of man and the act of existence which it determines and limits.

Frank Sheed said that Marx never really looked at man. When we reflect on the elements of the Marxist concept of man as we have described it, we find, not an incarnate spirit, an intellectual creature with an immortal soul, but a body making use of the cognitive faculties with which a favorable evolutionary process has endowed it. The only unity which has any meaning for Marx is man's oneness with nature, a unity of never-ending mediation of the opposition which prevents a total identification of this highest of nature's products with the physical matrix which is his only home and with which he is continuous.

Conclusion

This paper does not require any elaborate or explanatory summing up, although it may be useful to collect in a systematic fashion the principal conclusions reached. They are the following:

1) For Marx man has no stable, fixed nature, but he does have a history, the essential meaning of which is to be read in the dynamics of socio-economic relations.

2) The center and purpose of human life is labor, so that man is essentially a productive animal which achieves its perfection by improving the conditions under which its material needs are satisfied.

3) The spiritual and intellectual nature of man is denied or

at least ignored by Marx; this makes it impossible for Marx to explain the unity of man's nature or of his being.

In our exposition of we have concentrated on those points which relate more proximately to the problem of human unity. At the same time, in our appraisal of this doctrine we have stressed the weaknesses and flaws which render it unacceptable as a solution to the problem at hand. A fuller and, no doubt, more balanced presentation would not hesitate to point out the positive contribution of Marxism towards an understanding of man in some of his facets, as well as the agreements of Marxist anthropology with the Thomistic concept of man. In any case, it is all too easy to be unfair or too harsh on the teaching of one whose positions, while defective and fundamentally vitiated in large measure, have more often been attacked with virulent passion than analyzed with calm detachment.

It is not possible to say without qualification that the choice of Marx as subject of comparison with St. Thomas is an altogether happy one. If Marx had written more and thought more about this specific problem, his doctrine might have been treated with less prolixity. It may be some reassurance to venture the hope that Thomists still take up the task of appraising other philosophical positions of similar importance, even though the prospects are as dim as those which have been faced in dealing with the prophet of the proletariat.

JOHN PATRICK REID, O.P.

Providence CoUege
Providence, Rhode Island

ETIENNE GILSON AND THE CONCEPT OF EXISTENCE

IN 1952 the second edition of Etienne Gilson's *Being and Some Philosophers* was published.[1] This is a remarkable book in that the position maintained in the body of the work is apparently contradicted by the appendix written especially for the second edition. Throughout the book Gilson builds a case for the position that there is no concept of existence.[2] But in the appendix where he cites the criticisms of Fathers Louis-Marie Regis and Jean Isaac, Gilson admits that "No Thomist ... should write that existence *(esse)* is not known by a concept."[3]

[1] (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies) For the purposes of this study, *L'etre et l'essence* (Paris: Vrin, 1948) and *Being and Some Philosophers* will, for the most part, be considered as one work. *L'etre et l'essence* contains a series of lectures which Gilson gave as a course of study at the College de France, probably from the Fall of 1945 until the early part of 1948; cf. L.-B. Geiger, "Existentialisme, essentialisme et ontologie existentielle." In *Etienne Gilson, philo.oophe de la Chretiente* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1949) p. 252; (note 2 should read: "Voir *supra* p. 227, n. 3 "); N. Picard, [Review of *L'etre], Antonianum,* XXVI (1951) 169. Picard states that these lectures were given at the "Lutetiae Parisiorum" (on the lie de la Cite) and thus must have been given between 1945 and 1948, since Gilson was in Vermenton from 1941 to 1944; cf. below n. 17.

While Gilson presents substantially the same material in *Being* and *L'etre,* the English version constitutes a more summary treatment based on the French; cf. *Being,* pp. x-xi. For some points of interest to this project, one or the other work may be more explicit and therefore reference to it is more appropriate.

Several sources mention a 1948 edition of *Being* published by Declan X. McMullen, Garden City, N. Y. However, according to a letter received by this writer from Mr. McMnllen, "We had scheduled but never did publish this book."

[2] *Op. cit.,* pp. 3-4, 176-7, 193, 198, 202, 209, 214, 215. "The problem of the knowledge of existence is the alpha and omega of our author's book." (Reproduced by Gilson from an article by L.-M. Regis; cf. *ibid.,* p. 217 and *Modem Schoolman,* XXVITI [1950-1] 121.

[3] *Being and Some Philosophers,* p. 221; cf. *ibid.,* pp. 222-3, *225-6,* 228, 230. Fr. Regis reviewed *Being,* whereas Fr. Isaac reviewed that work as well as *L'etre et l'essence;* see *Bulletin thomiste* VIII (1947-53) 39-59. Georges Van Riet's study is limited to an examination of chapters 9 and 10 of *L'etre;* those chapters deal with

In the light of this change one is naturally quite startled to find the following statements in Gilson's *Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* published in 1956: [4]

... we have an abstract concept for essence but not for the act of existing. [5]

We understand now why judgment alone can penetrate to existence.6

A pure *est* is unthinkable/

It is quite impossible to come to the act-of-being by an intellectual intuition which grasps it directly, and grasps nothing more. [8]

This study proposes to show how Gilson came to deny in the first edition of *Being and Some Philosophers* in 1949 [9] that there is a concept of existence, and to show in what way he reversed his position in the appendix written for the second edition of that work in 1952. It will also be seen why Gilson made the above statements from *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* even though they seem to contradict what he said just four years before in the appendix to *Being and Some Philosophers.* Finally, *Elements of Christian Philosophy/0* one of Gilson's most recent works, will be examined to discover whether he has resolved these difficulties.

the knowledge of existence; see " Philosophie et existence," *Revue philosophique de Louvain,* XLVI (1948) 352-76. For some reason Gilson does not mention Van Riet's most pertinent article. After the appearance of the second edition, Ralph Mcinerney wrote "Some Notes on Being and Predication," *Thomist,* XXII (1959) 315-35, which analyzes the last chapter of *Being* (i. e. " Knowledge and Existence " corresponding to cc. 9 and 10 of *L'etre)* as well as the appendix.

If all versions and translations of *Being* and *L'etre* were considered as one work, it would be among Gilson's best known works. The research for this paper has uncovered *51* book reviews of the work in its various forms.

• (New York: Random House).

• *Christian Philosophy,* p. 40.

• *Ibid.,* p. 42.

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 368 (Throughout this paper all italicized words in quotations are as found in the texts cited.)

[8] *Ibid.*

• The imprint and pagination in the first edition are the same as that of the second edition. The addition of the appendix in the second is the only difference.

[10] (New York: Doubleday, 1960).

I

Gilson's statement in the first edition of *Being and Some Philosophers* (1949) that there is no concept of existence, goes back to 1939. In that year he wrote *Realisme thomiste et critique de la connaissance* [11] which represented the culmination of a lengthy dispute with Msgr. Leon Noel on the central problems of epistemology. [12] The first six chapters of that work are devoted to an analysis of the epistemological problem and especially to how various Thomists have attempted to solve it. Chapter seven presents Gilson's view as well as the justification of this view in the light of Thomas Aquinas' principles. Because in this chapter he indicates that there is no concept of existence/3 the question of .how man can know existence is taken up separately in the last (eighth) chapter. There again he repeats his position that there is no concept of existence/ [4] but also explains that the solution to the problem lies in judgment_l [5]

The impossibility *of* a concept of existence is repeated without modification from 1939 to 1949. In additions written for the fourth edition of *Le Thomisme* [16] in 1942/ [7] Gilson states

" (Paris: Vrin) a reprint appeared. in 1947.

[12] Cornelius Fay, "The Possibility of a Critical Realism: Noel vs. Gilson," *New Scholasticism,* XXXI (1957) 172-88; see esp. 183. Gilson's writings in this dispute (previous to 1939) were gathered together and became the first four chapters in *Le realisme methodique* (Paris, n. d. but sometime from 1935 to 1937). Apparently the fifth chapter was written for the occasion of publishing the papers together; cf. the indispensable bibliography by Callistus Edie in *Melanges offerts a Etienne Gilson* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1959) p. 36 n. 282. For Gil,on's references to Noel, see *thomiste*, preface, chapter 2 and pp. 35 n. 1, 37 n. I, 41 n. 1.

[13] *Realisme thomiste,* pp. 185-6.

[14] *Ibid.,* pp. 216-7, 220, 225.

[15] *Ibid.,* pp. 224-6. The intellect cannot separate existence from being and form a concept, as it does with essence. Nevertheless, it can affirm that being, as seen in the sensible, is an existent. In this way the intellect knows existence through judgment. Gilson's position that existence is known adequately only through judgment goes back to 1932 when he wrote "Realisme et methode" which later became chapter 2 of *Le realisme methodique.* For his statements on existence and judgment, see *ibid.,* pp. 48-9.

[16] (Paris: Vrin) What seems to be a thorough catalog of the changes in the 4th ed. (from the 3rd) is given by F. Van Steenberghen in *Revue philos. Louvain,*

that "we have a concept of being but not of existence." [18] For the fifth edition of *Le Thomisme* in 1944, he added only 15 pages which fall within the middle portion of chapter 7 in Part III. [19] Here again the statement is made that" existence is not the object of a concept." [20] This position is repeated in 1945 in the essay, "Limites existentielles de la philosophie," [21] and in 1946 in his address to the American Catholic Philosophical Association. [22]

In 1949 the first edition of *Being and Some Philosophers* appeared, a year after its French counter-part, *L'etre et l'essence.23* In both works he reiterates what he had been saying since 1939.[24] But a new factor is introduced. He cites Im-

XLVIII (1950) 431-2. Note that he is giving the pagination in the 5th ed. Where he has pp. 372-480, one should read 377-487.

A transcription of a lecture given by Gilson in 1949, begins: "Some years ago I wrote a book on the doctrines of St. Thomas Aquinas. Between the third and fourth editions of this book I became increasingly aware, very much so, of the important part that *Esse* plays in his teachings. As a result I tried to stuff as much *Esse* as possible into the third edition as a way of preparing the fourth. I succeeded to a certain extent in the section on God and on metaphysics in general. ..."

The transcription in MS has the title, "Some Applications of *Esse* in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas." It records Gilson's lectures given on Oct. 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20 of 1949 at the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies in Toronto.

[17] The preface has "Vermenton, 17 mai 1941." This means that he was in Unoccupied France (later occupied by Hitler's forces) during the war. A notation in *Melanges* (p. 13) has: "1941-1944: continue son enseignement au College de France." All the prefaces for the various editions of *Le Thomisme* are either in the front of the book or in Appendix I in the 5th ed. The 5th ed. was reprinted in 1945 and 1947. (In *Christian Philosophy*, p. vii, Gilson mentions a 1948 ed., but this cannot be located in any catalog; cf. *Melanges*, p. 42 n. 354. However, the paper cover, of some copies, has 1948 even though the title page has 1947).

[18] *Le Thomisme*, p. 61: "... nous avons un concept de l'etre, mais non de l'exister." See also pp. 62, 67. Because the 4th ed. (1942) is not generally available, the pagination of the 5th ed. will be cited.

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 505-20; the preface for the 5th ed. is dated "20 avril 1943."

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 511: "... J'exister n'est pas objet de concept;" cf. *ibid.*, p. 519.

[21] In the collection, *Existence* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945) pp. 70-1, 80, 83, 85-6.

[22] " Existence and Philosophy," *Proceedings A. C.P.A.*, XXI (1946) 16.

[23] Cf. Van Riet, *Rev. phil. Louvain*, XLVI (1948) 352 nfl1: "On peut considerer comme un resume fidele de *[L'etre et /'essence]* l'esquisse qu'en a tracee M. Gilson dans *Les limites existentieUes de la philosophic."*

[24] *L'etre et ['essence*, pp. 7-9, 109-12, 117-20, 248-52, 255, 267, 308, 318-9; cf. pp. 283, 285-6; *Being*, pp. 3-4, 176-7, 193, 198, 202, 207, 209, 215.

manuel Kant as being one of the first to realize that there is no concept of existence, and that the problem of the concept of existence is the source of mnch confusion and difficulty in metaphysical endeavors. Not only does Gilson agree with Kant that this is the source of many difficulties, but he proposes that "The unique object of the present work is to throw some light on this fundamental ambiguity," [25] which is that a person can conceive a being without conceiving its existence. Furthermore, he indicates in his study of Kant that Kant was led to consider the role of the concept of existence when he understood that the existential character of Hume's empiricism could not be entirely eliminated from metaphysics. [26]

Now, the objective of the first part of this paper was to trace Gilson's thought to the point in the first edition of *Being and Some Philosophers* where he says that there is no concept of existence. By tracing his thought back to *Realisme thomiste,* one better understands that the doctrine about the concept of existence in *Being and Some Philosophers* represents convictions which Gilson held for many years and which quite logically came to bear upon the project he proposed in 1949 (and 1948).

However, it turns out that this analysis is quite superficial. The influences· which had been at work from 1939 to 1949 were much more complex than what has been revealed in the preceding discussion. As one reads Etienne Gilson's works on metaphysics and epistemology during this period, one repeatedly encounters clues to more subtle influences. More detailed study leads one back through a complicated maze of multiple references and a variety of borrowed ideas.

One of the most readily detected clues can be seen in Gilson's statements about Kant in the beginning of *Being and Some Philosophers.* There Gilson says that Kant would agree that existence cannot be conceived, and then gives these quotations from the *Critique of Pure Reason:*

[25] *L'etre,* p. 9: "L'unique objet du present travail est de jeter quelque lumiere sur cette ambiguite fondamentale .... " Gilson's discussion of Kant's position is on pp. 7-9, 184-203 of *L'etre,* and pp. 3-4, 119-32 in *Being'.*

[26] *L'etre,* pp. 188-9; *Being,* pp. 122-3.

'Being ... is evidently not a real predicate, or a concept of something that can be added to the concept of a thing.' [27]

'By whatever and by however many predicates I may think a thing (even in completely determining it) nothing is really added to it, if I add that the thing exists.' [28]

Immediately after the latter quote, Gilson adds: "In short, actual existence cannot be represented by, nor in, a concept." [29]

Now, what is remarkable is that Gilson has changed the perspective of his discussion in an important way. *Being and Some Philosophers* is presumably written by a Thomist who considers that the mind attains adequate knowledge of things through the mediation of the senses. As chapter *5* clearly indicates, Gilson is convinced that the intellect does know existence. However, the first few pages of the book not only raise the problem of how the mind knows existence, but indicate that it could never form a concept of existence. To invoke Immanuel Kant here as one who understood the problem is somewhat perplexing. Kant, in fact, held that there is a concept of existence. [30] Of course, as with every concept (category, form) in Kant's system, he held that man is not certain how accurately (or whether) the concept of existence applies to things. [31] Moreover, Gilson is well aware that Kant did not consider existence in a *noumenon* as an aspect or determinate of the thing. The word "existence" merely reflects the fact that the total being is "posited" in the real (noumenal) order. [32]

[27] *Being,* p. 3; cf. *Critique of Pure Reason,* Transcendental Dialectic, Bk. II, ch. 3, sect. 4; (Berlin Akademie ed., III, 1911 401; also cited as B 626 where B means the original second edition of 1787; Great Books ed. [Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952] XLII, ISla).

[28] *Being,* p. 4; cf. *Critique,* loc. cit.; (Berlin Ak., III, 401; B 628; Great Books, XLII, 181b) . In *L'etre,* p. 7 Gilson refers to this "celebre passage de la *Critique"* but without giving its location.

[29] *Being,* p. 4; cf. *L'etre,* p. 8.

[3°] *Critique,* loc. cit. (Berlin Ak., III, 399-403; B 624-30; Great Books ed., XLII, 180b-182b).

[31] *Critique,* Transcendental Logic, Bk. II, ch. 1, sect. 3 (Berlin Ak., III, 90-7; B 102-13; Great Books ed., XLII, 41b-44a).

[••] *Being,* pp. 125-7; cf. *L'etre,* pp. 191-6.

Certainly Gilson's appraisal is correct when he says, "In short, actual existence cannot be represented by, nor in, a concept." This statement does represent Kant's position. However, when Kant says that actual existence cannot be known, it is not for the same reason that Gilson has in mind. For Gilson, existence cannot be conceived, "Because it lies beyond essence. . . ." [33] For Kant, actual existence cannot be conceived because the mind is incapable of attaining the existent *(noumenon)* which transcends man's experience of the real. [34] The mind has a concept of existence but there is no way of knowing whether it corresponds to actual existence.

There can be little question but that Gilson is something of an authority on Kant's philosophy. [35] Why, then, would Gilson entertain this shift in perspective from the Thomistic to the Kantian? Presently an attempt will be made here to show that he introduced Kant's position because he was to some degree influenced by the writings of Pedro Descoqs and Joseph Marechal.

There are other reasons suggesting that Gilson came under influences not directly evident in his writings. He cites David Hume as having some effect on Kant's notions on the concept of existence, but Gilson does not indicate that Hume said anything on whether or not there is a concept of existence. The fact is that Hume did say this. [36] Although he refers to the Appendix (pp. 635-6) of Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature,* Gilson disregards Hume's statement in the same Appendix (p.

[33] *Being,* p. 202. It would seem that Gilson adapted his phraseology to correspond to that aspect of Kant's philosophy which holds that actual existence cannot be conceived. Gilson's more common phrase is "There is no concept of existence." But an expression such as "Existence cannot be conceived" puts Gilson in contradiction with what he says in chapter 6, namely, that judgment which does enable man to know existence, is a kind of conceiving; cf. below n. 70.

[34] Cf. H. W. Cassirer, *Kant's First Critique* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1954) pp. 172, 207-11; James Collins, *History of Modern European Philosophy* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1954) pp. 461-3, 504-7.

[35] Cf. for example, his *Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Scribners, 1946) chapters 9, 12 as well as *Being,* pp. 119-32 and *L'etre,* chap. 6.

[36] *Treatise of Human Nature,* Bk. I, Part II, Sect. 6; *ibid.,* Part III, Sect. 7; *ibid.,* Appendix. (Selby-Bigge ed., pp. 66-8, 94, 623).

623) that there is no concept of existence.[37] In view of his explicit declaration that he is investigating the concept of existence in *Being and Some Philosophers,* how can one explain Gilson's disregard of Hume's clear statements about the concept?

Some explanation of Gilson's approach to Kant and Hume is had, when Gilson's thought from 1939 to 1949 is retraced in greater detail than was done above.

It was seen that Gilson first made his statements on the concept of existence in *Realisme thomiste et critique de la connaissance.* It is quite certain that, at that time, he came under the influence of Pedro Descoqs, S. J.,[38] and Joseph Marechal, S. J.,[39] while studying their theories on Thomistic epistemology. At times the evidence is somewhat circumstantial. However, the reader will see that the weight of evidence precludes the possibility of coincidence.

[37] Gilson cites Selby-Bigge's ed.; see *L'etre,* p. 189 n. 2; *Being,* p. 123 n. 29. Gilson gives Selby-Bigge's ed. as 1896 *(L'etre* has the misprint 1396) whereas the 1958 ed. has the years of publication as 1888, 1897, 1917....

[38] Georges Van Riet seems convinced of the influence of Descoqs (and Gabriel Picard) but he does not attempt to substantiate it; see *L'epistemologie thomiste* (Louvain: Editions de I'Institut Superieur de Philosophic, 1946) pp. *505,* 507. The precise influence of Picard's work on Gilson's thought is difficult to ascertain, but two points are noteworthy. First, all of chapter 3 of *Realisme thomiste* is devoted to a thorough examination of Picard's *Le probleme critique fondamental* in which he maintains that there is no concept of existence; see *Archives de philosophic,* I, cahier 2 (1923) 22, 29; cf. 30. Secondly, although the ideas of Picard and Descoqs tend to be identified, in epistemology Picard's work is considered the dominant one; cf. *Realisme thomiste,* p. 101 n. 1; Van Riet, *op. cit.,* pp. 378-9; Descoqs' review of Picard's *Probleme* in *Arch. de phil.,* II, cahier 2 (1924) 201. Thus, on the question of the concept of existence, Picard's notions determined what Descoqs had to say. 'While Gilson's position is traceable more directly to Descoqs, it must be recognized that it was Picard who prepared the way as regards the concept of existence.

[39] *Le point de depart de la metaphysique.* Cahier I-V (Louvain, Paris: Desclee de Bouwer, 1923-6; 2nd ed., 1944-9). Each cahier is a volume by itself; e. g. Cahier II: Le conflit du Rationalisme et de l'Empirisme dans Ia Philosophic moderne avant Kant (Paris, 1944) 261 pp. Marechal also wrote a Cahier VI. However, in its recent advertisements for " Publications du Museum Lessianum, section philosophique " Desclee de Brouwer has this entry for publication 8: " Cahier VI. Les epistemologies contemporaines. (Ce cahier dont Ia redaction a ete interrompue par Ia mort de !'auteur ne sera pas publie);" cf. Andre Marc, *L'etre et l'esprit* (Paris, 1958), last pages in book.

Descoqs' influence is first seen in the fact that his ideas are the last to be analyzed in *Realisme thomiste* before Gilson, for the first time, indicates that he hold's that there is no concept of existence. Moreover, Gilson cites one of the pages in Descoqs' *Cours de Theodicee* where he explains why there is no concept of existence. (However, Gilson's reference is not directly connected with the concept.[40])

While this is not conclusive, in subsequent works it becomes increasingly evident that Descoqs is considered an authority in this matter by Gilson. Among the changes which he prepared for the 4th edition of *Le Thomisme,* Gilson inserted three pages[41] which deal mainly with epistemology. Within these few pages he repeats his stand on the concept of existence/[2] but what is noteworthy is that the three authorities cited are Thomas Aquinas, Etienne Gilson and Pedro Descoqs.

Then, in *Being and Some Philosophers* there is no question but that Gilson associates his position with Descoqs. In the earlier works one strongly suspected that Descoqs had influenced Gilson's thought. Now, however, his agreement with Descoqs is open and explicit. In the following passage "they" with whom Gilson is disagreeing about the distinction of essence and existence, refers to Fr. Decoqs.

[40] Gilson's references to Descoqs are in *Realisme tkomiste,* pp. 68 n. 1, 101 n. 1, 160 n. 1, 176 nn. 1-2, 177 n. 1. Gilson refers to Descoqs' *Praelectiones tkeologiae naturalis. Cours de Tkeodicee* (Paris, 1932-5) I, 38, 40, 41, 43, 45-8, 50, *55-6,* 60-6. Descoqs says there is no concept of existence, on pp. 43, 72, 266 esp. n. 1, and 641-3. The page containing Descoqs' position on the concept and cited by Gilson, is p. 43. Gilson first adopts the position that there is no concept of existence on p. 185 in *Realisrne tkomiste,* i.e. 7 pages after the place (p. 177 n. 1) where he cites p. 43 of *Cours de 1'keodicee.*

[41] Pp. 326-8; cf. *Christian Pkilos. St. Tkos. Aq.,* pp. 231-3. Note that the insertion in the 4th ed. was prepared before May 17, 1941. Certainly this was a rather brief interval after writing *Realisme tkomi.•te* in that France was invaded by the Germans the preceding summer and Gilson had remained in France (at Vermenton). This would seem to reflect the proximity of Descoqs' influence in 1939.

[42] *Le Tkomisme,* p. 328: "... le jugement ... est seul capable d'atteindre, par dela !'essence des etres que le concept apprehende, cet *ipsum esse.* ..." Note that Gilson cites Descoqs' *Cours de Tkeodicee.*

And, since each and every essence is an object of both concept and definition, the very fact that there is no concept of existence as such is to them a sure sign that existence itself is nothing. " Existence," they say, " *existentia, id quo formaliter ens constituitur actu,* that is, that whereby being is constituted in act, is not a concept, but a pseudo-concept." [43]

On the following page Gilson's agreement with Descoqs on the concept of existence is again in evidence when he takes up Descoqs' phrase, "pseudo-concept," (even though it is to correct Descoqs' explanation of why existence is not conceivable): "As a concept, 'to be' is indeed a pseudo-concept, but 'to be' might well escape representation in virtue of its very transcendence." [44]

All of this provides some evidence that Gilson originally accepted the doctrine that there is no concept of existence as a result of his study of Descoqs' work while he was writing *Realisme thomiste.*

Again, when one turns to Gilson's presentation of Kant's ideas, Descoqs' influence may be detected. The key section is the first part of Descoqs' chapter on Kant in *Cours de Theodiaee* (i.e. I, 641-5) . In spite of Gilson's silence about this section, there are at least four points which relate Gilson's work to this section. First, in *Cours de Theodicee* and in *Being and Some Philosophers* the same passage from the *Critique of Pure Reason* is cited (beginning, "Being is evidently not a real predicate . . ." [45]) and this is followed in both works by a discussion of the impossibility of having a concept of actual existence. Gilson's statement is: "In short, actual existence cannot be represented by, nor in, a concept;" whereas, Pedro Descoqs has: "Besides, it is true that actual existence as actual pertains to no concept of a contigent thing." [46]

•• *Being,* p. 176; cf. *L'etre,* pp. 109-10 esp. the notes.

"Being, p. 177; cf. *L'etre,* pp. 110-1.

•• Cr. above n. 27.

•• *Being,* p. 4; *Theodicee,* I, 643: "Verum est praetera existentiam actualem ut actualem ad nullum conceptum rei pertinere contingentis; " the complete discussion on Kant and the concept of existence extends from 641-4.

Another, somewhat involved piece of evidence brings together the thought of Descoqs, Gilson and Fr. Joseph Marechal. Immediately after the above passage in his *Cours de Theodicee,* Fr. Descoqs cites certain pages in Marechal's Cahier III [47] which are part of Marechal's exposition of how Kant's *opuscula* were preparations for the *Critique of Pure Reason.* It seems beyond question that Gilson, because of Decoqs' reference, searched out Marechal's exposition. In the first place, Gilson in *Being and Some Philosophers* refers to the same section of Kant's *opusculum, An Essay on Negative Quantities* which Marechal cites. [48] Secondly, Gilson also refers to three passages in the *Essay on God's Existence* to which Marechal makes reference. [49] To say this is coincidence is nearly impossible because each passage involves only one or two pages. l\iore-over, of Gilson's five references to Kant's *opuscula,* four are given by Marechal." [0]

Again, the key section in Descoqs' *Cours de Theodicee* seems to have also influenced chapter 6 of *Being and Some Philosophers,* which is devoted to Gilson's own explanation of how existence is known. Gilson begins that chapter by distinguishing *conceptus* by which man knows essence, from *conceptio* by which judgment is made. [51] In Gilson's view, existential judg-

[47] Descoqs' references are to Marechal's ed. In the 1944 ed. (which is probably the one in most libraries), see pp. 48-9, for Descoqs' references to pp. 197 in the ed. The pertinent pages for this reference are 48-9.

[48] Gilson, *L'etre,* pp. 189 n. 190 n. 1; *Being,* p. nn. 30; Marechal, III, 33 n. 34, n. 1, *35* n. 1. Both refer to *Versuch den Begriff der negativen Grossen zn die Weltweisheit einzufuhren,* III, Allegemeine Anrnerkung Ak., II

•• The passages are: (1) *Der einzig mogliche Beweisgrund zu einer Demonstration des Daseins Gottes,* III, (Berlin Ak., II, 156-7); cf. Gilson, *L'etre,* p. 194 n. 3; *Being,* p. n. 36; Marechal III, 49 n. Kant, *loc. cit.,* I, 1, (Ak., II, 73-5); cf. *L'etre,* p. n. 1; *Being,* p. *H5* n. 33; Marechal, 47 n. 1; (3) Kant, *loc cit.,* I, 1, 1 (Ak., II, cf. *L'etre,* p. 191 n. 1; *Being,* p. 1M n. Marechal, 46 n. 1.

[50] Gilson also refers to *Beweisgrund,* I, I, 3 (Ak., II, 75-7); see *L'etre,* pp. 193 n. I, 194 n. *Being,* p. n. *35.* Although Marechal does not cite these pages in *Beweisgrund,* he does refer to the material on either side of this passage; see Marechal, III, 47 n. 1 and n. 1.

[51] *Being,* p. 190.

ment provides knowledge of real ("actual") existence.[52] 'What is noteworthy is that this distinction between *conceptus* and *conceptio* was made by Descoqs in the same passage criticising Kant's statements on the knowledge of existence. Of equal importance is Descoqs' position that only through conception can existence be known.[53] Also within this context, Descoqs places the knowledge of essence through *conceptus,* in the "abstract" order implying that judgment is in another order.[54] Similarly, in Gilson's treatment of the existential judgment, judgment is distinguished from the " abstract" knowledge characteristic of understanding essence.[55]

Finally, the passage from the *Critique* which Gilson uses as the key-note for *Being and Some Philosophers,* ("Being is evidently not a real predicate ...") is found in those sections of Descoqs' and :Marechal's works which were just considered. Now, Gilson terms this passage the "celebre passage de la *Critique."* [56] There seems little reason to label this passage as a famous one other than the fact that Gilson probably saw it analyzed in both Descoqs' and Marechal's studies.

There remains the question of Gilson's appraisal of Hume and his failure to cite Hume as holding that there is no concept of existence. It seems certain that Gilson relied almost entirely on Marechal's statements in the latter part of Cahier II where Marechal discusses some of Hume's ideas. The Selby-Bigge edition of *The Treatise of Human Nature* is at issue here. Gilson gives the date of that edition as 1896[57] which is the date given by mistake by Marechal.[58] According to the 1958 edition,

•• Cf. *ibid.,* pp. 206-9; *L'etre,* pp. 294-9.

•• *Theodicee,* I, 642-3.

•• *Ibid.,* 642. One element of Descoqs' thought that Gilson in no way accepted is the notion that a knowledge of existence is achieved through intellectual intuition. In the *Elements of Christian Philosophy* he specifically excludes it from Thomism; see below n. 135; cf. *Theodicee,* 642.

•• *Being,* ch. 6 esp. pp. 213-5; cf. *L'etre,* pp. 307-10.

•• *L'etre,* p. 7. Descoqs, p. 645 in *Theodicee* refers to Marechal, Ill, 197-202 which are pp. 256-62 in the 1944 ed. For Marechal's quotation, see 1944 ed., p. 260 n. 1.

[57] *L'etre,* p. 189 n. 2; *Being,* p. 123 n. 29. *(L'etre* has the misprint 1396).

•• Cahier II, 208

there was no 1896 edition.[59] Moreover, in following Marechal's quote from Hume, Gilson corrected Marechal's error in the spelling of " renonce " (by changing it to "renounce ") , but Gilson made the error of "correcting" Marechal's spelling of " connexion " without realizing that Hume actually gave that older spelling rather than "connection."[60] Taken together, these points suggest that Gilson did not actually look at the *Treatise,* but only followed the information provided by Marechal in the latter part of Cahier II.[61] This in tum would seem to answer the question about Gilson's faulty appraisal of Hume. The passages cited from Marechal's Cahier II (i.e. pp. fl08, fl41) fall in the first part and conclusion of chapter five which is an analysis of Hume's epistemology. Now, within that chapter Marechal reports (with quotations) on Hume's stand that there is no concept of existence.[62] In view of the fact that *Being and Some Philosophers* intended to investigate this concept, Gilson's disregard of Marechal's report on Hume, could well be explained by assuming that Gilson merely examined the first and last pages of chapter *5* in Cahier II. Consequently it appears that it is due to the fragmented information he gathered from Marechal, that Gilson produced his inaccurate portrayal of Hume.

Somewhat the same explanation would seem to account for his evaluation of Hume's influence on Kant. How is one to explain the following except as a poorly educated guess?

> We do not know with certainty what, exactly, Kant had read of Hume, but there is little doubt that this sentence [from the appendix to Hume's *Treatise]* was the very one that aroused him from his dogmatic slumber.[63]

•• See ed., p. viii. Apparently there was only a first ed. in 1888. Subsequent editions, 1897, 1917 ... , were only reprints; cf. *ibid.*

•o Cf. *ibid.,* 636; Gilson, *loc.* cit.; Marechal, IT, 241.

[61] Gilson's quotation *(L'etre,* p. 188) from Hume's *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding* is not given by Marechal, nor is it near that cited by Marechal, II, 240. Note, however, that Marechal's reference to the *Enquiry* is on the page preceding that on which he analyzes the Appendix in Hume's *Treatise,* and that it is that analysis which Gilson seems to have followed.

[62] Marechal, II, 228, 236.

[63] *Being,* p. 122; cf. *ibid.,* p. 123: "This time we are sure that Kant has read at least the Appendix to Hume's *Treatise*. ... " Cf. *L'etre,* p. 189 n. 2.

Those who have made extensive studies into the influence of Hume on Kant have not ventured any statement so bold. He may be correct in his appraisal but there is no way for him or anyone else to be at all certain.[64] But why did he say this about the sentence in the appendix? As was just suggested, Gilson encountered the sentence at issue in his study of What seems likely is that, because Marechal had presented him with what appeared to be an appropriate quotation, Gilson concluded that this sentence could very well be the passage Kant read. But at its best this conclusion could only be a guess.

In retrospect, one sees the persistence of Fr. Pedro Descoqs' influence from 1939 to 1949 as that of Fr. Joseph Marechal. In 1939 in *Realisme thomiste* Gilson studied and apparently accepted the position of Descoqs on the concept of existence. In 194Q in changes for the fourth editi_on of *Le Thomisme,* the name of Fr. Descoqs is cited in the passage dealing with the concept of existence. Finally, Descoqs' influence has been seen throughout *Being and Some Philosophers* along with that of Fr. Marechal.

Of course, one must avoid over-emphasizing Gilson's reliance on those whom he consulted. It cannot be suggested that Gilson did in no way examine the works ·of Kant or Hume in con-

•• Kant was familiar with the ideas in the *Treatwe* as they are found in translations of the *Inquiries.* Sections of the *Treatise* (including the statements cited by Gilson) were "rewritten" (transferred) by Hume for the *Inquiries.* These were quoted at length by Beattie (to repudiate Hume's position). Subsequently Beattie's work was translated into German and read by Kant; cf. Leon Noel, *Le realisme immediate* (Louvain, 1988) pp. *56-7;* II, 207; III, 40-1; Robert Wolff, "Kant's Debt to Hume via Beattie," *Journal of the Hwtory of Ideas,* XXI (1960) 117-28 esp. 123. It may be significant that Hume is one of the few major philosophers in the modern era whom Gilson did not study in any detail. This may explain why he persisted in tracing Hume's notions on causality primarily to Malebranche; see, for example, his *Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy* (New York: Scribners, 1940) pp. 15, 86; *Unity of Philosophical Experience,* pp. 216-9. A survey of the writings listed in the 1952 bibliography on Hume does not reveal any other writer connecting Hume and Malebranche; cf. *Revue internationale de philosophie,* VI (1952) 250-3. James Collins' treatment of Hume illustrates the point, for he relates Hume's thought to 9 thinkers but Malebranche is not included; see *Hwt. of Modern European Phil.,* Index under "Hume."

nection with the questions at issue. What this study has attempted to show is that Gilson was guided more by referring to Descoqs and Marechal than by a thorough study of Kant and Hume.

The objective in the first part of this study has been to understand the influences whereby Gilson not only adopted his stand on the concept of existence, but made it the key notion of *Being and Some Philosophers.* Undoubtedly there are other points which show his reliance on the thought of others. The points selected here were chosen because they were either directly or indirectly related to investigating Gilson's position that there is no concept of existence. In understanding this, it has been seen that the denial of the concept was but one of many notions which he apparently accepted from the men he consulted.

II

The second part of this paper attempts to delineate the changes in Gilson's position as revealed in the appendix of the second edition of *Being and Some Philosophers* in It may be recalled that the appendix was written to answer the objections raised by Fathers Louis-Marie Regis and Jean Isaac, against Gilson's statements in the first edition of *Being and Some Philosophers,* that there is no concept of existence.

In concluding his discussion of Fr. Regis' comments,[65] Gilson makes this distinction:

> Unless we consider it necessary to identify *praedicare* and *dicere,* there is some justification for distinguishing between the metaphysical conception of *esse* and its logical concept.[66]

[65] The central points of Fr. Regis' criticism are included in the excerpt which Gilson reproduces toward the beginning of the appendix (pp. 217-21). The article originally appeared in the *Modern Schoolman,* XXVIII (1951) 111-25. (Note 2, p. 216 in *Being* should read pp. 21-5). For this paper, references for Fr. Regis' statements will be made to the excerpt in *Being.*

[66] *Being,* p. 227. The possible influence of the Suarezian, Fr. Pedro Descoqs, again rears its head. Once more, Gilson does not cite this passage but he does cite sections before and after the following: " Le concept meta physique ou reel est celui qui represente la realite sans avoir besoin de correction ou de complement dans sa ligne formelle, celui qui exprime simplement la realite objective, l'etre.

The terms *praedicare* and *dicere* recall a previous point where Gilson maintained that for St. Thomas there is no difference between these two terms, but when speaking to contemporary non-Thomists, one should be aware that for them *praedicare* would refer to a logical concept.[67] When speaking to these people, one should agree with them that the logical concept of existence (the copulative use of *to be)* tells nothing about real existence.[68] However, Thomists should be clear in insisting that there is a metaphysical concept of *esse.*[69]

The crucial question is, What does Gilson mean by a metaphysical concept of *esse?* This involves a distinction between *conceptus* and *conceptio* which Gilson had actually made in the first edition, and restates here in the appendix.[70] *Conceptio*

Le concept *logique* est le produit d'une abstraction imparfaite qui exige un complement ou une correction parce que comme tel, il n'exprime pas Ia realite qui est: v. g. le genre est un concept logique, parce que 'non datur forma generis:'" see " Thomisme et Scolastique," *Archives de philosophie,* V cahier 1 (1927) 109 n. 2. Cf. *Being,* p. 176 nn. 41, 42 where Gilson cites pp. 108 and 112 of Descoqs' essay. Previously, in 1944 Gilson made this same distinction in the passage written for the 5th ed. of *Le Thomisme,* i.e. pp. 512-8. Note that the discussion suggests that he has Descoqs in mind: "Bien d'autres, qui font profession de thomisme . . . ;" cf. below n. 79.

[67] *Being,* p. 224.

[68] He substantiates this position by pointing to " the remarkable scarcity of logical considerations about existential propositions in classical logic . . ." *(Being,* p. 227).

[69] *Ibid.,* pp. 222-8. Note that this is not "a distinct concept of *esse* in itself, apart from the concept which we do have of 'Socrates-conceived-as-existing.'" *(Ibid.,* p. 225) .

[70] Cf. *Ibid.,* p. 190 n. 1 with p. 222; as was suggested, this distinction apparently came from Descoqs; cf. above pp. 9-10. Within his presentation of this distinction, Gilson evidently involved himself in a contradiction. He introduces the distinction between simple apprehension and judgment with the phrase, "Now, the intellectually conceived is twofold in kind . . ." and then continues, "In both cases there is an intellectual act of conceiving and, therefore, a conceived intellection . . ." *(Ibid.,* p. 190). But in chapter 1, when explaining why Kant was correct in denying the ontological value of the concept of existence, Gilson used the phrases: *"'Being'* is conceivable, *'to be'* is not. \Ve cannot possibly conceive an *'is'* except as belonging to something that is, or exists." Again, ". . . *being* is always *conceived* by us apart from existence, for the very simple reason that existence itself cannot possibly be *conceived." (Ibid.,* p. 8). Thus, one reads in chap. 1 that existence cannot be conceived, but in chap. 6 Gilson says that existence is known by judgment which is a kind of intellectual conceiving.

refers to the act of judgment whereas *conceptus* means the intellect's abstraction of an essence. But Gilson also understands *conceptio* as including *conceptus.* Thus, he is willing to say that the existential judgment which would be a *conceptio,* could also be termed a *concepitts.* His new position, then, would be that, "No Thomist ... should write that existence *(esse)* is not known by a concept." [71] Even though this is only a change in terminology since concept now also means judgment.

One may conclude that Gilson sees the concept of existence in three contexts. First, as related to the logical use of "is," this concept tells nothing about real existence. Secondly, in the context of essentialist metaphysics, there could not be a concept of existence, because this concept would be abstract and therefore could only attain essence or quiddity. Whenever he used the word " concept " he had been addressing himself " to the tenants of being conceived as *realis essentia."* In this case " concept " had " the narrower sense of ' simple apprehension . . . .··· [72] Finally, the concept of existence resulting from judgment *(conceptio)* does grasp existence. This latter is what Gilson calls a metaphysical conception of *esse,*[73] and could also be termed concept in a broader sense of that word.

How is one to evaluate the position which Gilson has assumed in the appendix? Several notions resist extending " concept" to the broader sense of judgment. In the first place Gilson

[71] *Ibid.,* p. 221.

[72] *Ibid.,* p. 2£3.

[73] The term "metaphysical " seems to be related to the term "concrete" at least as both apply to a knowledge of existence. Commenting on a passage from the *Summa Theologiae,* Gilson says, "But the true noun answering the verb 'to be' is not essence, it is being. *Ens* signifies *in abstracto* the act concretely signified by *is." (Being,* p. 23£). Fr. Regis does not name the "concept which cannot be abstract" *(ibid.,* p. 220), but merely refers to *In de Trinitate, 5,* 3. What seems to be the relevant passage does not state explicitly what the non-abstract concept should be called; cf. the Decker version of *Expositio super librum Boethii de Trinitate* (Leiden: Brill, 1959) p. 182. In A. Maurer's translation of questions *5* and 6 *(Division and Methods of the Sciences,* Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1958) see p. 27. On the other hand, in his *Elements of Christian Philosophy,* to be analyzed shortly, Gilson says that there is no quidditative concept of existence, but when he does speak of the concept of existence, he terms it " abstract." See below pp. 29-30.

admitted in the first edition of *Being and Some Philosophers* that " it is at least doubtful that Thomas Aquinas ever called a judgment a *conceptus."* [74] Thus he is on shaky ground when he says in the appendix, "... even a judgment is a ' conception' ... hence a *conceptum."* [75]

Further, it seems certain that "the broader sense of the term" [76] *conceptus* disregards, if not contradicts, Fr. Regis' statements. Fr. Regis said:

> If we admit that ' to exist' can and must be known in and by a concept of apprehension, we also admit that there is a second knowledge of ' to exist ' which comes after the first, controls, and completes it. This is affirmation, an act of judgment, whose soul is neither the subject nor quiddity, nor even the verb or the act of existing but the *synthesis* of the two, the unification of the substance and of its act par excellence, ' to exist.' [77]

From this it seems impossible for Gilson to claim that he is in agreement with Fr. Regis if he insists on using the word, " concept " in the broader sense applied to knowledge of existence through judgment. Fr. Regis clearly distinguishes the concept resulting from apprehension, from the act of judgment. Moreover, he says that "to exist" must be known in apprehension. Judgment perfects this knowledge by joining the concept of the substance with the previously developed concept of existence.

The survey of Gilson's statements from 1939 to 1949, made in the first part of this paper, raises another objection to his use of " concept " in a broader sense than the first operation of the intellect. In the appendix he claims that in the first edition of *Being and Some Philosophers* he was "not using the language of Saint Thomas" [78] when he said that there is no concept of existence. His statements were intended for "the tenants of being conceived as *realis essentia."* [79] However, it

"Being, p. 190 n. 1.
[75] *Ibid.,* p. [71] *Ibid.,* p.
[••] *Ibid.* [TS] *Ibid.,* p.
[79] *Ibid.,* p. in this connection Gilson mentions Suarezians (pp.

has been seen that Gilson first said there is no concept of existence in 1939 in *Realisme thomiste et critique de la connaissance*. This work represented his fullest, most direct reply to Msgr. Leon Noel who seemed to consider himsel£ a Thomist. [80] Then, there is Gilson's monumental work, *Le Thomisme* which does not bear the mark of being addressed to non-Thomists. Again, he repeated his stand on the concept of existence in 1946 for the annual convention of the American Catholic Philosophical Association. It hardly seems safe to assume that most of the members of that organization are not Thomists.

One cannot dispute the fact that Gilson had non-Thomists in mind when he wrote *Being and Some Philosophers*.[81] Of course, the same thing is true of *L'etre et l'essence* as well as of "Limites existentielles de la philosophie" which is the only essay written by a Thomist in the collection, *Existence*. But what is undeniable is that in each work which contained his statement on the concept of existence, Gilson formulated his statement in exactly the same way regardless of whether the work was written for Thomists or non-Thomists. Therefore, his claim is difficult to understand when, in the appendix, he states that he was writing specifically for non-Thomists wherever in *Being and Some Philosophers* he said that there is no concept of existence. He had been saying that for years to Thomists and non-Thomists alike using the same terminology m every case.

Finally, one may point to the internal structure of his presentations on the concept from 1939 to 1949. In' each work, Gilson begins by presenting the arguments against the possibility of a concept of existence. In the larger works this pre-

Nco-Scholastics (p. 227) and, in general, any of "our own contemporaries" who are not Thomists (p. 223); cf. p. 224; "his own contemporaries." He *also* includes St. Thomas' "modern scholastic interpreters," (p. 227) who presumably are not followers of Thomas. On the next line he mentions the Neo-Scholastics, and in view of his other statements about the Suarezians especially Descoqs (pp. 170, 176-7) , Gilson seems to feel that these people tend to interpret Aquinas in the light of Suarez' thought and therefore could hardly be called Thomas' followers.

[80] Cf. Fay, *New Scholasticism*, XXXI (1957) 183.

[81] Cf. *Being*, preface.

sentation may occupy a complete chapter. Then there is the transition to what the mind must do in order to grasp existence, that is, the mind must say (in judgment) that essence is actualized by existence.[82] In this way the intellect attains truth because its activity conforms to the joining together of essence and existence in things. Thus, there are negative (no concept of existence) and positive (existential judgment) elements in Gilson's explanation of man's knowledge of existence. Anyone who has noticed this pattern, must be puzzled to learn that the positive element can also be called a concept in spite of the many negative statements on the concept of existence, which Gilson had written over a period of years.

III

It should be recalled that in the fourth (1942) and fifth (1944) editions of *Le Thomisme*, Etienne Gilson introduced his position on the concept of existence. On the basis of the fifth edition, Fr. L. K. Shook, C. S. B., prepared an English translation entitled *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas.*[83] However, Gilson's revised position on the concept of existence, expressed in the appendix of 1952, presented certain difficulties for a new translation. The fact is that the fifth edition of *Le Thomisme* has several sections which say that there is no concept of existence. As Fr. Shook was preparing the new translation, Gilson knew that he could not let those sections stand.

In the appendix he admitted that there must be a metaphysical or concrete concept of *esse*. It would hardly do to

[82] Cf., for example, *L'etre,* ch. 9 which explains why there cannot be a concept of existence, and ch. 10 which indicates how existence is known in judgment. In *Being* the corresponding discussions are within ch. 6: pp. 190-202 are on the concept and pp. 202 (beginning "The most serious mistake ...") to 215 is on judgment. Of course, in neither case is the particular section (ch. or pp.) devoted exclusively to the concept or judgment of existence.

[83] The last translation was made in 1925 and was based on the 8rd ed. of *Le Thomi.nne* which appeared in 1927; cf. *Melanges,* p. 28 n. 87.

allow the following statements in *Le Thomisme* to be translated without change:

... we have a concept of being but not of existence.[84]

But reason does not like the inconceivable, and because existence is just that, philosophy makes every effort to avoid it.[85]

What characterizes Thomism is, in effect, the decision to locate existence at the heart of the real, as an act transcending every concept ....[86]

... taken in itself, existence is not the object of a concept.[87]

Thus, being at grips with the secret energy which causes its object, a philosophy [of existence] finds in the direction of its limitations the principle of its very fertility. It will never believe that it has arrived at the end of its inquiry, because the end is beyond what it can enclose in the bounds of a concept.[88]

In view of his revised position in the appendix of 1952, one naturally expects certain changes to be incorporated in the new translation of *Le Thomisme.* In the foreword to *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas,* he indicates that changes have been made and that these are primarily concerned with " the notion of the act of being *(esse)* . . . ."

•• *Le Thomisme,* p. 61: "... nous avons un concept de l'etre, rnais non de l'exister."

[85] *Ibid.,* p. 67: "Mais la raison n'aime pas l'inconcevable, et parce que l'existence l'est, la philosophie fait tout pour l'eviter."

•• *Ibid.,* p. .511: "Ce qui caracterise le thomisme, c'est en efl'et la decision de situer !'existence au coeur du reel, comme un acte transcendant tout concept .... "

[87] *Ibid.:* "... pris en soi, l'exister n'est pas objet de concept."

[88] *Ibid.,* p. 519: "Ainsi aux prises avec l'energie secrete qui cause son objet, une telle philosophie trouve dans le sens de sa limite le principe de sa fecondite meme. Elle ne se croira jamais arrivee au terme de son enquete, parce que le terme s'en trouve au dela de ce qu'elle peut enclore dans !'enceinte d'un concept." Reexamining these statements in the light of his changed position, Gilson found himself accused by his own words which he had written in *Le Thomisme* (p. 44) for the additions made to the 4th ed. in "Renconnaissons d'ailleurs que ses interpretes les plus fideles ont eux-memes bien fois involontairement delorme !a notion thomiste de l'existence, parce qu'elle est malaisee a saisir et. que, de par sa nature meme, il est encore moins difficile de !a saisir que d ene plus !a laisser echapper." The sense of this statement was modified significantly as far as the aims of the present project are concerned, for in *Chmtian Phil.,* p. Gilson rephrased his position to say: "Even his most faithful interpreters have themselves sometimes overlooked the Thomistic notion of being .... "

> The only important event bearing upon my study of Thomas Aquinas during these eight years, was my discovery ... of Banes' commentary on the first part of the *Summa Theologiae.*
>
> By and large, however, Banes appears to me to be by far the most Thomistic of all the Thomists whom it is my privilege to know. This is eminently true concerning the notion of the act of being *(esse)* which is the very core of the Thomistic interpretation of reality. [89]

What is surprising is that the reason given for making these changes is Gilson's examination of Banes' work. One naturally wonders about Fathers Regis and Isaac. Moreover, it should become apparent in the following analysis that their remarks had considerable influence on the changes made for the translation. These changes relate to Gilson's explicit avowal in the appendix of 1952 that he was speaking of the abstract, quidditative concept when he said there is no concept of existence. By adapting the terms " abstract concept" and "quidditative concept" along with similar phrases and textual alterations, Gilson manages to avoid some of the difficulties presented by the statements in the fifth edition of *Le Thomisme.* It should also be noted that, whatever influence Banes may have had, is extremely difficult to detect. [90]

First, consider the changes made in the passages cited above. Where Gilson said, "we have a concept of being but not of existence" in *Le Thomisme,* in *Christian Philosophy* he wrote, "we have an abstract concept for essence but not for tlie act of existing." [91] Next, compare the second passage cited above

[89] *Christian Phil.,* p. vii. Note that Gilson says that *Le Thomisme* (5th ed.) was written in 1948; this is the reason that he says " during these eight years; " but cf. above n. 17. The expression "notion of the act of being" is somewhat ambiguous. Does it refer to the Thomistic doctrine of existence or to what Thomists say about man's knowledge of existence? As will be seen, the research for this paper uncovered many changes in Gilson's statements about the concept of existence, but none about the doctrine of existence. This applies specifically to Part I chapters 1 and 4, Part II chapter 7 and Part III chapter 7.

[90] Banes seems to be mentioned only in the foreword and as part of n. 1, p. 444. The latter mention is an addition to the note found in *Le Thomisme,* p. 48 n. 1. Further investigation may reveal the influence of Banes in the omission of two rather lengthy passages from p. 44 of *Christian Phil.;* cf. *Le Thomisme.* pp. 66-7.

[91] *Christian Phil.,* p. 40.

from *Le Thomisme* with the following in *Christian Philosophy:* "Reason dislikes the undefinable, and because pure existence is undefinable, philosophy does all it can to avoid it." [92] For the third passage, *Christian Philosophy* has: "What characterizes Thomism is the decision to locate actual existence in the heart of the real as an act transcending any kind of quidditative concept .... " [93] For the next passage one finds: "... taken in itself, the act-of-being is not the object of a quidditative concept." [94] The last passage is substantially the same in *Christian Philosophy* except that the last word is "definition." [95]

It can be seen that Gilson has modified the statements in *Christian Philosophy* to conform to the negative position which he had always expressed on the concept of existence. Wherever feasible he made changes such that he was now saying that there is no abstract, quidditative concept of existence. [96] In other instances he simply avoided saying that existence cannot be known by a concept.

Anyone who has followed the discussion thus far naturally expects that Gilson made one more change in *Christian Philosophy.* One would expect that somehow he would also let it be known that, according to his philosophy, there is a concept of existence and that this concept is metaphysical or concrete. Unhappily, the research for this paper has not found that this is the case. The changes exemplified in the five passages cited are typical. Besides these, other changes were made by omitting one or more sentences from *Le Thomisme* and in its place one finds nothing, or a short phrase; occasionally there is a complete sentence to replace a lengthy passage. [97] The most extensive

[92] *Ibid.,* p. 44.

[93] *Ibid.,* p. 368. (Probably the second "of" is a typographical error).

[94] *Ibid.*

[95] See *ibid.,* p. 370.

[96] In other contexts Gilson also added the words " abstract" "quidditative" or their derivatives to " concept " and other terms, but these do not deal directly with the concept of existence; cf. *Christian Phil.,* pp. 44 (twice), 45, 91, 368 (twice), 369 with *Le Thomisme,* pp. 67, 68, 133, 511, 512 respectively.

[97] In addition to the changes already cited, others can be found by comparing *Chri.<!tian Phil.,* pp. 34, 40, 41, 44, 91, 94, 368, 370 with *Le Thomi.Yme,* pp. 51, 61-2,

addition to *ChTistian Philosophy* seems to be the four lines on page 44 beginning," We cannot think of.... " It seems beyond dispute that Gilson made no attempt to include the positive aspects concerning the concept of existence, which he adopted in 1952. An adequate revision of *Le Thomisme* would have included his views on the exact nature of the metaphysical concept of existence; in 1952 he indicated that this question was of primary importance. [98] This in turn would include some statement on how this concept is acquired. In fact, this would have been an ideal situation to restate his conviction, expressed in 1952, that the judgment of existence includes the concept of existence. A discussion of this kind is nowhere to be found. Rather than complicate or delay the translation, he merely wrote his few corrections in the text of *Le Thomisme* for Fr. Shook's translation. Most of these were one or two words. In other instances he merely deleted undesirable phrases or passages.

The results produced by this simplified method are disconcerting for one who has read Gilson's statements of 1952 about the metaphysical, concrete concept of existence. Nowhere does he say that there is such a concept or that there is any kind relating to existence. If a person read nothing other than *Christian Philosophy,* he would never suspect that Gilson holds for any kind of concept of existence.

Nor is that all. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the reader repeatedly encounters statements that existence is only attained in the existential judgment. The following excerpts are representative:

> We understand now why judgment alone can penetrate to existence. To formulate an experience such as ours in which all its objects are composite substances, we need a thought itself composite. To express the activity of the principles which determine these substances, our thought must duplicate the exterior act of the form by the interior act of the verb. Because the very root of the

62, 66-7, 133, 138, 511, 513 respectively. There is more than one change on pp. 40, 44, 91.

•• *Being,* pp. 224-5, 227-30.

real is an act, the act of judging alone can attain the real in its root. [99]

His metaphysic of being as being 'consignifies' existence. It does not 'signify' it unless precisely it uses the second operation of the understanding and employs all the resources of the judgment.[100]

The reason why ... the judgment is the understanding's most perfect operation is that it alone is capable of attaining, beyond the essence of the beings which the concept grasps, that *ipsum esse* which is ... the very source of all reality

The force of these statements is heightened by the fact that they represent the climax and solution of Gilson's portrayal of the difficulties inherent in a philosophy of existence. The discussion preceding the analysis of the existential judgment progresses as if in search of some means of attaining existence. Apparently this means is not a concept because the majority of statements on the concept are negative in character [102] and because the search quite evidently finds its conclusion in Gilson's remarks about the act of judgment being ideally suited to attain the act of existence. For the reader to conclude from this that Gilson holds for any kind of concept of existence seems virtually impossible.

Furthermore, the impression that existence is only attained in judgment is substantiated by another facet of Gilson's doctrine on the existential judgment. The existential judgment constitutes the very core of man's knowledge of being. Just as existence is that actualization and perfection of being, so the knowledge of existence is at the very center of the concept of being. Because this doctrine is stated over and over again [103] one inescapably believes that Gilson teaches that existence

[99] *Christian Phil.*, p. 42. Substantially the same line of argumentation is found at the top of p. 41.

[100] *Ibid.*, p. 44; cf. *ibid.:* "Raised to the plane of the judgment, Thomism will again make contact with the very heart of the reality it is interpreting; " *ibid.*, p. 374: "Of course we cannot see existence but we know it is there and we can at least locate it, by an act of judgment .... "

[101] *Ibid.*, p. 232.

[102] Cf. above, p. 17.

[103] *Christian Phil.*, pp. 40, 44 (5 times), 232, 368, 369.

cannot be known by itself but only within the concept of being. The doctrine that there is a concept of existence is nowhere visible. The case for the concept of being is clearly given here:

> The only means of speaking about the act-of-being is to grasp it in a concept, and the concept which directly expresses it is the concept of being. . . . It is quite impossible to come to the act-of-being by an intellectual intuition which grasps it directly, and grasps nothing more. To think is to conceive. But the proper object of a concept is always an essence, or something presenting itself to thought as an essence; in brief, an object. The act-of-being, however, is an act. A pure *est* is unthinkable; but an *id quod est* can be thought. [104]

If one pauses here to look back on Gilson's pronouncements for the existential judgment as well as the concept of being, and recalls those statements relating to a knowledge of *esse,* one readily gets the impression that Gilson could not possibly hold for a concept of existence. Note, for example, these phrases from what has been cited thus far:

> It is quite impossible to come to the act-of-being by an intellectual intuition which grasps it directly, and grasps nothing more. [105]
>
> A pure *est* is unthinkable. [106]
>
> [Judgment attains existence] beyond the essence of the beings which the concept grasps .... [107]
>
> .. one cannot think of ... *esse* without *ens.* [108]

Evidently Etienne Gilson's particular method of modifying his position for the translation of *Le Thomisme,* has not had the results which, according to the foreword,' [00] he intended. Whether a person had read the appendix of 1952 or not, it is not likely that he would grasp the full significance involved in the (revised) statement in *Christian Philosophy,"* There is no

[104] *Ibid.,* p. 368. Two changes were made in this passage for translation: (1) for "to conceive" *Le Thomisrne,* p. 511 has "in the first place to conceive" (d'abord concevoir); (2) for "proper object" the French has "object" (!'objet).

[105] *Christian Phil.,* p. 368.

[106] *Ibid.*

[107] *Ibid.,* p. 232.

[108] *Ibid.,* p. 44.

[109] Cf. above n. 89.

abstract concept of existence." In the face of Gilson's other remarks, especially those dealing with the existential judgment and the concept of being, it would indeed be an unusual reader who would realize that Gilson holds for a metaphysical or concrete concept of existence.[110]

IV

An entirely different presentation is found in *Elements o.f Christian Philosophy.* The tenor of the discussion unequivocally aims at showing that there must be a concept of existence. There is the candid admission that "even the so-called 'Thomists' have been and still are divided on this point," because of " a general reluctance to conceive the act of being *(esse)* as a distinct object of understanding."[111] However, Gilson is assured that St. Thomas not only had a notion of existence but that he was anxious for his followers to see its necessity. Possibly recalling his own difficulties in this matter, he asks, "but how can he make us see it if we don't? "[112]

One does not find the sentence, "There is a concept of existence," but the equivalent is seen in the following remarks:

[110] This conclusion must take into account a sentence in *Chmtian Phil.,* p. 369, which seems to contradict everything said here: Gilson says that the controversy over the distinction between essence and existence " shows how easy it is to substitute the abstract concept of existence for the concrete notion of the act-of-being .... " However, this was part of the *15* pages added in 1944 to *Le Thomisme,* i.e. p. 512, and in that addition Gilson clearly stated that existence could not be known in a concept; cf. pp. *511, 519.* Moreover, as was just seen, he explained that the only way man can conceive *esse* is in the concept of being (p. 513). One is left without any means of determining what Gilson meant by " notion" in 1944. (Further research may reveal that " notion " is a vague term to account for the fact that man has real knowledge of existence even though there cannot be separate, conceptual knowledge. Also, some light may be provided by Gilson's apparent allusions in this same paragraph, to the Suarezians esp. Descoqs, in such phrases as "essentialize " and " professed Thomists." These suggest that Gilson may have had in mind Descoqs' distinction between a metaphysical and logical concept; cf. above n. 66. Another possibility is that he used this term to refer to the understanding of existence within the existential judgment).

[111] *Elements,* p. 131.

[112] *Ibid.*

how did Thomas Aquinas achieve the awareness of the very possibility of this notion [of existence]? It certainly results from a supreme effort of abstraction, since, in order to form it, the intellect must conceive, apart from the condition of being an existent, the act owing to which the existent finds itself in this condition. [113]

... the distinction [of essence and existence] presupposes the notion of *esse* conceived . . as the highest intrinsic principle of ... being. [114]

... all the arguments ... to establish the distinction between being and essence ... presuppose the prior recognition of the notion of the 'act of being' *(esse)* .[115]

Moreover, conceiving apart that which the thing is and the fact that it actually is, we can form ... two abstract notions .... [116]

Gilson also raises the question of the origin of the concept of existence, both for the individual and as an historical matter. For the individual, considerable difficulty results from the impossibility of demonstrating the act of existence. It can be seen that existence must be abstracted from the reality with which man finds himself associated in this world. Given the fact that man knows existence, the only conclusion is that somehow he did acquire it. But to demonstrate this or to prove to an individual person that his knowledge of existence is acquired in a particular way, seems impossible. [117]

The historical origin of the concept is an equally difficult question: Gilson previously treated this matter rather extensively in *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas.* [118]

[113] *Ibid.;* the question of conceiving existence in connection with a knowledge of God is discussed on pp. 1S2, ISS, 2SS.

[114] *Ibid.,* p. ISO.

[115] *Ibid.*

[116] *Ibid.,* cf. p. 2S5. Less direct statements concerning the question of conceiving existence are on pp. 102-S, 116, 118, 121.

[117] *Ibid.,* p. lSI.

[118] Pp. 85-6, 93-4, 1S2-5. All of these were additions made in the 4th ed. of *Le Thomisme.* It should be noted that in *Christian Phil.,* Gilson is only concerned with the question of Augustine's and Moses' knowledge of existence. There was no point in raising the question of whether they had a concept of existence because this passage was written in 1942 when Gilson was convinced that no one had a concept of existence. However, he definitely felt that a knowledge of existence was possible, and proceeded to inquire into Augustine's and Moses' knowledge of it.

In that work he quotes at length from St. Augustine who found God's words, "I Am Who Am," quite meaningless. Because of his Platonic, "essentialist" frame of reference, Augustine experienced considerable anxiety, wondering what God meant when He said that He is Who is. How is God revealing His nature here?

'We were waiting for him to say what he was, yet he did not say it. What did we think he was going to say? Perhaps, *if you do not believe that I am the* Christ; *if you do not believe that I am,* the Son of God; *if you do not believe that I am* the Word of the Father ... .'[119]

Augustine was perplexed and disappointed because Moses made no attempt to explain the meaning of *Qui est.* Not only was Moses the recipient of this word directly from God (or His angel), but he also recorded it in Exodus. For this pronouncement, so significant for mankind's understanding of the Supreme Being, Moses apparently felt no explanation was necessary.[120] Thus, for St. Augustine the problem remained insoluble.

One naturally asks whether Moses had an understanding of God's words. If he did, it could be said that this would involve a concept of what existence is and would indicate that the concept had its origin deep in the history of mankind. In this work *(Christian Philosophy)* Gilson argues that Moses did not formulate any notion of existence.[121] God revealed that His essence is existence, but

[119] *Christian Phil.,* p. 85; cf. pp. 86, 134. There are minor errors relating to pp. 85-6. Note 6 which was omitted through a typographical error, should occur on p. 86 at the end of the third line from the bottom. The reference for this note on p. *455* should read: "St. Augustine, *In Joannis Evangelium;* 38...." This applies to the two long quotations on pp. 85-6. Cf. *Le Thomisme,* pp. 125-6 esp. 126 n. 2 which also has the error "tract. XXVIII" instead of "tract. XXXVIII."

[120] *Christian Phil.,* pp. 86, 132.

[121] Judging from the quotations and discussion of Augustine's attitude provided by Gilson, one would conclude that in St. Augustine's mind there was little doubt that Moses did understand the meaning of *Qui est;* see *Christian Phil.,* pp. 86, 94; for Gilson's reference on p. 94 to *Summa Contra Gentiles,* read Book I not II.

> God no more explained it to Moses than to Augustine or to us, as if, having revealed to men the truth that saves, He had reserved the understanding of it to the patient efforts of the metaphysicians. [122]

But turning now to *Elements of Christian Philosophy,*. one finds that the opposite stand is taken. It must be kept in mind that after writing the above words for *Christian Philosophy* (i.e. in *Le Thomisme* in 1942) he apparently changed his convictions in 1952 when writing the appendix to *Being and Some Philosophers.* Thus, in 1960 (i.e. in *Elements)* he wrote:

> ... after establishing that God's essence is His very *esse,* [St. Thomas] adds that 'this sublime truth Moses was taught by our Lord.' Now, 1\Ioses could not learn this sublime truth from our Lord without at the same time learning from Him the notion of what it is to be a pure existential act. [123]

What is remarkable is that in both *ChTistian Philosophy* and *Elements* Gilson's judgments are based upon St. Thomas' discussion in *Summa Contra Gentitles,* Book I, chapter 22. The diversity in Gilson's judgments in 1942 and 1960, reflects the different convictions he held concerning the concept of existence. His evaluation in 1942 [124] conformed more closely to his conviction at that time that there is no concept of existence for Moses or anyone else. By 1960 he had accepted the opposite position concerning that concept. Thus it was more natural for him to conclude from the discussion in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* that Aquinas felt that Moses did have a concept of existence.

One must suspect that this discussion is subsidiary to the question more meaningful for Thomists, namely, how did St. Thomas acquire the concept of existence? To be sure, neither Gilson nor anyone else could hope to give a definitive answer. But Gilson inclines to see Aquinas developing his notion of existence through reflection *on* Exodus, III, 13-14:

[122] *Christian Phil.,* p. 86; cf. p. 94.

[123] *Elements,* p. 132.

[124] Page 94 of *Christian Phil.,* which is primarily at issue here, is the translation of a passage added to *Le Thomisme,* 4th ed.; cf. above n. llS.

Thomas Aquinas may well have first conceived the notion of an act of being *(esse)* in connection with God and then, starting from God, made use of it in his analysis of the metaphysical structure of composite substances. [125]

How convinced he is that Thomas first conceived existence this way is difficult to say. Certainly, the question must remain tentative and academic. But it should be observed that according to his own words, Gilson weakens his case concerning Thomas Aquinas acquiring the concept of existence through a study of Exodus. He does this in two ways. One is the position he took on the manner in which each individual develops the concept. When he says that everyone must attain a knowledge of existence from the reality surrounding him, this must be taken in a perennial sense, not just "post-Aquinas." Secondly, he discusses the probability that a person must already have a notion of existence before he could apply it to God.

All our notions of God are directly or indirectly borrowed from our notions of finite beings, and if we did not first discern the act of existing in the structure of God's creatures, how could we think of identifying it with the very essence of the divine being? [126]

The result is that the reader is not certain of what Gilson's convictions are. However, it is more than likely that his basic convictions would trace the· development of the Thomistic concept of existence back to " I Am Who Am." Following tlie passage just cited, Gilson refers to chapter Book I o.f the *Summa Contra Gentiles* and, among other things, concludes: "This invites us to admit that, according to Thomas himself, his notion of *esse* can be learned from the very words of God." [127]

[125] *Elements,* p. 131; cf. pp. 132-3, 233.

[126] *Ibid.,* pp. 131-2. This argument is somewhat ambiguous because it assumes that the persons involved ("All our notions of God "-Thomists?) conceive of God as having that highest perfection which is existence. But the discussion implies a universal and perennial context. If Gilson has only Thomists in mind (and then he should have said so) then the argument would go back to an awareness of Exodus, and thus the mere statement of the argument as given is quite meaningless.

[127] In other contexts and other works, Gilson devoted considerable effort to the

Three points remain to be mentioned, all of which go back to Gilson's other works. The question is raised about the role of judgment in attaining existence. Unlike *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas,* there are no statements such as, "Only in judgment does man know existence." However, judgment is still proclaimed to be an activity of the mind whereby existence is known.

> . . . the second operation of the intellect cannot attain being without, by the same token, attaining the act that lies in it beyond essence.[128]
>
> The second operation, which is the composition or division of concepts-that is, the judgment-attains the thing in its very act of being.129

In the second passage note the mention of concepts. Whether one of these could be the concept of existence, or whether judgment is in any way related to the concept of existence, is not discussed.

T"ne second point deals with the abstract, quidditative concept of existence. It will be recalled that in previous works, an

Angelic Doctor's treatment of the ,nature of God, but he makes no mention of it here. In *Elements,* p. 123 Gilson refers to the fact that Thomas invoked the authority of Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite concerning *esse* as the being of God. From this discussion, *as* in his fuller treatment in *The History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York: Random House, 1955), pp. 81-5, the possibility from examination of those parts of the *Summa Theologiae* (i.e. I, q. 4, a. 2; q. 3, a. 4) cited by Gilson *(Elements,* p. 123 n. 23).

Other possibilities are treated in the 1949 lectures given at the Mediaeval Institute; see above n. 16. For the most part those lectures analyze St. Thomas' commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. Gilson indicates that Thomas equated existence with God's essence because Moses Maimonides had taught that existence is the most appropriate name for God. (Lectures for Oct. 5 and 6). He goes on to point out in the other lectures that Thomas' convictions were strengthened by what he also found in other parts of the *Sentences,* relating to the thought of St. Jerome, St. John Damascene, Avicenna and the Pseudo-Dionysius.

But then again, in "La notion d'existence chez Guillaume d'Auvergne," Gilson not only stated that William of Auvergne was Aquinas' predecessor in that \Villiam held that God's essence is existence but also suggests that Thomas had seen this notion treated in William's writings; see *Archives d'histoire doctrinale de la litterature Medievale,* XV (1946) 75-7.

[108] *Elements,* p. 232.

[120] *Ibid.,* cf. pp. !i!SS, !i!S5.

abstract concept of existence was equated with the quidditative concept, and that Gilson held that existence could not be known through either type. The reader is not surprised, then, to read, "There is no *Qui* in God; only an *est,* and of this *est* itself . . . we have no quidditative concept." [130] But now Gilson maintains that there is an abstract concept of existence: "... we can form the two abstract notions of *essence* ... and of *existence*. ..." [131] This is a direct contradiction of the change he made for *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas.* There he said, "... we have an abstract concept for essence but not for the act of existing." [132] There seem to be two reasons for the position that there is an abstract concept of existence, as stated in *Elements of Christian Philosophy.* The first reason has already been cited on two previous occasions: the need for explaining how an individual knows existence, can only be reduced to the fact that a person must have abstracted this notion from the real things of this world. [133] The second reason seems to be based on St. Thomas' words: " *'ipsum esse significatur ut quiddam abstmctum.'* " [134] The " supreme effort of abstraction" whereby existence is known, is identified with the mind's power to conceive. [13"] One can only wonder what happened to Gilson's notion that the concept of existence must be a concrete concept. [135]

[130] *Ibid.,* p. 233.

[131] *Ibid.,* p. 130.

[132] *Christian Phil.,* p. 40.

[133] *Elements,* p. 131.

[134] *Ibid.*

[135] *Ibid.* In this connection Gilson makes the interesting observation: "... the notion of the ' act of being' ... cannot possibly be an intellectual intuition, because there is no such thing in Thomism." (p. 130). Unlike Jacques Maritain who also follows St. Thomas, Gilson is convinced that conception is quite different from intellectual intuition. For Maritain's Yiew, see for example the section, "The Intuition of Being" in *Existence and the Existent* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday Images Books, 1956) pp. 28-31. See also above n. 54.

[136] In 1944 Gilson indicated that a person would "essentialize" the concept of existence if he termed it an abstract concept; see *Le Thomisme,* p. 512; cf. *Christian Phil.,* p. 369. Possibly one could write a separate report on Gilson's use of the word "abstra<'t" in his several writings; cf., for example, the points made above in nn. 73, 96, 100. In view of the other evidence relating to Descoqs, note

Finally, this analysis of *Elements of Christian Philosophy* throws further doubt on Gilson's central position in the appendix of 1952. He admitted that" No Thomist ... should write that existence *(esse)* is not known by a concept," [137] but he went on to insist that this concept is achieved in the existential judgment, and somehow is that judgment. It was also seen that in *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* he failed to substantiate his position of 1952, concerning the metaphysical concept. Now, it could be argued that he was working in that translation with a set of statements formulated in a different context and therefore intended to establish somewhat different points. Insofar as only a translation was involved, one could say that Gilson could do little to alter the general trend of argumentation. However, in *Elements of ChTi.stian Philosophy,* he was undertaking a new work with no particular commitments concerning the concept of existence. Nevertheless, no distinction is made between *conceptio* and *conceptus.* Even if it is maintained that *Elements* is a non-technical book, if not a popular one, Gilson would still have an opportunity to say that the concept of existence is had only in judgment. Careful examination of the above passages cited from *Elements,* reveals no such statement. Gilson even goes so far as to use the

73 above may reflect the attitude toward the meaning of " abstract " which Gilson adopted for a while at least. Note that, like Gilson, Descoqs relates "abstraction" to the logical concept but not the metaphysical. More specifically in the appendix of the reader encounters implied parallels or similarities between noun, abstract, abstraction, logical, quidditative and essence on the one hand, and then these are contrasted with verb, concrete, judgment, metaphysical, existential and existence; see *Being,* pp. esp. Some of Gilson's difficulty seems to stem from overemphasizing the relation of grammatical and philosophical terms. For example, he says, " Running does not signify an essence; that which runs has an essence, but running itself is an act," *(Ibid.,* p. It seems evident that "running" does not refer to a substantial essence but is in the order of essence since it is an accident, namely, an action. Moreover, essence including accident is an act. It is remarkable that Gilson had listed " action" as one of the accidents in the first edition of *Being,* i. e. p.

In his article on *L'etre,* Van Riet devotes most of that article to showing that Gilson tends to confuse the real order with the intentional order; see *Rev. phil. Lauvain,* XLVI (1948)

[137] *Being* p.

terms "abstract" and "abstraction" in connection with the concept of existence. The presentation in *Elements* strengthens the suspicion, that Gilson in 1952 recognized the force of Fathers Regis' and Isaac's arguments in favor of a concept of existence, but that he decided to tie that concept with the existential judgment.[138] However, in his later work Gilson discussed the concept as something achieved independently of the judgment of existence.

V

One effect this study may have is to make the reader more cautious about accepting as final any particular statement on the concept of existence as given in any specific work by Gilson. This point may be exemplified by this excerpt from J\tisgr. Charles Hart's excellent survey, "Twenty-five Years of Thomism."

> The reason for the failure of so many philosophical systems to go on to existence lies perhaps in the fact that existence cannot be conceptualized as can nature or essence. Existence requires the more perfect intellectual act of judgment. Existence is expressed by saying a thing (nature or essence) is. Yet the human intellect, by reason of its dependence on abstraction, tends much more easily to think in concepts, to grasp forms or essences rather than to make a judgment by which alone it can go onto the act of essence, namely, its existence.[139]

These remarks are based on the first edition of *Being and Some Philosophers.* Would Gilson still subscribe to this position? On the basis of the evidence submitted in this paper, it seems unlikely. However, in two works which appeared in 1962, one is left in doubt. One work is the second edition of *L'etre et l'essence*[140] which, unlike the first edition, has two appendices. Within one of them, it is disconcerting to read a summarized version of the principal position given in the appendix to the second edition of *Being and Some Philosophers.*[141] Again, in *The Philosopher and Theology* Gilson has written:

[138] Cf. *ibid.,* p. 222.
[139] *New Scholasticism,* XXV (1951) 15.
[140] (Paris: Vrin).
[141] *Ibid.,* p. 351.

the philosopher himself knows well enough that all he may have said successively, all the different assertions which, understood to the letter, sometimes appear contradictory, still ring true to him and from some point of view still meet with his approval. A nian does not change simply because he tries to solve the same problem over and over again, and especially not if the data include an unknown quantity whose exact value will always escape him.[142]

One naturally feels that Gilson has the problem of the concept of existence foremost in mind. How appropriately this statement applies to his treatment of the concept of existence over the years, the reader must decide for himself.

HARRY LA PLANTE

Detroit Institute of Technology
Detroit, .Uichigan

u• (New York: Random House, p. 7.

.UNDERSTANDING ACCORDING TO BERNARD J. F. S.J.

PART II

IN a previous article [1] we have outlined the cognitional analysis given in the first part of Lonergan's *Insight.* Now we may compare this with Lonergan's own outline of St. Thomas' cognitional analysis. Here, we are not trying to judge whether or not Lonergan is accurate in his interpretation of Thomas' thought on this point. We wish, rather, to understand the interrelation of different stages of Lonergan's own development. His summary of Thomas' cognitional analysis presupposed, as already established, a metaphysics and a rational psychology. We may briefly outline pertinent parts of the Thomist theory in these terms.

From the experiences of the various internal and external senses a phantasm or imaginative representation is formed. The agent intellect illumines the phantasm, making the *species* actually intelligible and impresses this *species* on the possible intellect. The possible intellect, as a spiritual reality, is intelligible, at least in potency, as well as intelligent. When it receives a determination through the coordinated activity of the agent intellect and the phantasm, it has an intelligent conscious awareness of the intelligible determination received. What it understands is the nature of the material object represented in the phantasm, a type of knowing which is essentially incomplete. In expressing what is understood and in seeking to attain a profounder understanding man forms a 'verbum,' which may be a concept, definition or hypothesis.

Does this verbum truly represent the object? This leads to the second mental operation which is also a two step process. The *'intelligere'* proper to the second mental operation is a

[1] " Understanding according to Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S. J.-1" Hereafter, this will be referred to as I.

reflection on the evidence available to support the prospective judgment. Such a reflection involves a resolution into first principles and, at least implicitly, a self-penetration by which the soul is aware "in actu exercitu' both of its own essence as spiritual and intelligible and of its own ability to know truth. We know by what we are. This resolution is guided by the virtue of wisdom. 'Vhen reflective understanding grasps the consistency between the proposed judgment and the ultimate term of the resolution, it is satisfied and is rationally impelled to place a judgment. Only in such a judgment is formal truth had.

Though Lonergan had labored many years elaborating his analysis of Thomist cognitional theory, he did not explicitly presupopse it in *Insight.* Rather, it would seem, the conclusions drawn from his historical studies served as an heuristic structure guiding his cognitional analysis. The assumption underlying his methodology is: if the Thomist theory is valid it is so, not because it is Thomist, nor because it is endorsed by a venerable tradition, but simply and soleJy because it expresses procedures and structures immanent and operative in human knowing. Granted this principle, the true path to an adequate cognitional theory begins with careful observation of various cognitional processes and proceeds by way of analysis. It does not begin by appropriating principles from texts or traditions and then seek to impose these upon reality. Accordingly, Lonergan's cognitional analysis dispenses with any *a priori* principles, pre-established truths, or implicit assumptions. The actual path he blazed began with the fact of experience that we do have insights, new acts of understanding, then proceeded to analyze the various types of knowing proper to the polymorphic consciousness of man, and finally concluded with the basic characteristic of the three levels found in any complete act of knowing: the levels of experience, understanding and judgment.

This triple structure is the phenomenological counterpart of

• *Insight,* chap. xi.

the sense experience leading to a phantasm and the two mental operations previously considered. Also, the analysis of *Insight* revealed that the second and third levels of knowing each involve a two-step process. On the second level one first has an insight, an understanding of the significance of some experience. Then one attempts to express this insight in terms of concepts or explain it through general principles. Thus, in physical, mathematical, and common-sense knowing he rediscovered Thomas' *"intelligere* " followed by a " *dicere verbum."* There is a similar parallel between sufficient reflection leading to judgment and Thomas' explanation of the intelligible emanation of the word characteristic of the second mental operation. In both treatments the primary stress was given, not to the structure of knowing with its attendant process of abstraction, concept formation, reasoning and judgment, but to the active intervention of intelligence which grounds and gives intelligibility to these processes.

In the *Verbum* series this stress was achieved by a meticulously elaborated explanation of Thomas' teaching on the inner word as an intelligible emanation. A concept or judgment is grounded in a conscious grasp of understanding and proceeds as the rational expression of what is understood precisely because it is understood. This is not an automatic quasi-mechanical process. In *Insight* Lonergan avoided teaching this in a didactic way. Rather, he presented a variety of instances in which insight was operative as the grasp of an· intelligible unity in sensible data, showed how insights and higher insights lead to concepts and definitions expressing what is understood or hypotheses concerning the inner reason for the intelligible unity detected, proceeded to judgment and showed how a rational judgment issues, as a function of intelligence, from an intelligent grasp of evidence sufficient to warrant the judgment. The reader was urged to rethink these or similar examples, reflect on the dynamism immanent and operative in his own cognitional processes and come to an understanding of what it means to understand. The cognitional analysis proper to both

studies is essentially the same. Lonergan did not intend to develop a novel doctrine but to rethink, in a modern context, the doctrine which Thomas developed, a doctrine which the Thomistic tradition has often neglected or misinterpreted.

Strict adherance to this purposeful methodology left many questions unanswered and, in fact, unasked. What is the nature of the reality known? How can we be sure that our knowledge represents reality rather than mental categories imposed on reality? Such questions are neither simply disregarded nor treated as trivial. Rather, they find their proper place in the unfolding of Lonergan's methodology: thoroughly understand what it is to understand and you will understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood.

Our purpose in the present study is to understand, not the broad lines of aU there is to be understood, but simply Lonergan's explanation of the nature and scope of understanding. However, this can not be adequately grasped without considering his explanation of the unfolding of understanding. In sketching this we shall concentrate on the unity and intelligibility conferred on the study by his distinctive methodology and on some conclusions, not generally held, which flow from his understanding of understanding.

III. UNDERSTANDING AND REALITY

We have considered in some detail Lonergan's analysis of cognitional activity and his explanation of the invariant structure immanent and operative in all thinking processes. Before tracing the unfolding of this analysis a precautionary note is in order. Man is not a pure intellect. His consciousness, which is his own experience of himself, can flow in various patterns such as the practical, the dramatic, the aesthetic, and the intellectual. The development of cognitional analysis through the moving point of view demands a strict adherence to the intellectual pattern. This is not, so to speak, a matter of being on the side of the angels-in Aquinas' rather than Disraeli's sense of the term. It is, rather, a matter of intellectual asceti-

cism: of attempting to understand the given data, of asking questions and requiring reasonable answers, or refusing to assent to any hypothesis unless there is sufficient evidence to warrant assent, of not fearing to commit oneself when the evidence is judged to be sufficient. Above all, it is a matter of reflection on one's own cognitional processes, trying to grasp what it is to pass from ignorance to empirical awareness, from confusion to understanding, from uncertainty to self-commitment.

The Development of Metaphysics

The preceding cognitional analysis concluded with an account of consciousness and suggests the proposition, "I am a knower." Should this proposition be affirmed? The obvious answer would seem to be that one must affirm it because it is true. Such an answer, however, would short-circuit Lonergan's presuppositionless methodology because it would implicitly presuppose a standard of truth which has yet to be established. Lonergan treats this question by noting that one is naturally impelled to answer "Yes," and asks whether or not it is really possible to avoid such an answer. An answer of "No," i.e., the proposition, "'I am a knower' should not be affirmed," implies an understanding of the question and a reason for the negative response. This reliance on understanding and reason implicitly contradicts the "No." Perhaps one could simply keep silent? The fact is that a man confronted with a question does not keep silent unless he judges that it is a reasonable thing to do, again implicitly affirming that he is a knower. Perhaps one could evade this self-affirmation by replying "Yes," but considering this reply to be probable rather than certain, an answer which is tentative on the basis of present evidence but subject to possible revision. Such a reply might seem to have the merit of scientific objectivity, for science proceeds by means of tentative assumptions and subsequent revisions. Actually, the attempted evasion confuses a theoretical explanation with a judgment of fact. Even the scientists make judgment of fact-this is a Geiger counter-and accepts them as final. Accord-

ingly, Lonergan has reached one basic affirmation, the self-affirmation of the knower, on which he can build with confidence.

Man is a knower-but what does he know? Again, this cannot be answered in a way consistent with Lonergan's self-set rules by presupposing evidence not yet established. Rather, one must begin with the self-affirmation of the knower, understanding that this implies a dynamic orientation impelling the knower to seek new data, greater understanding, and surer knowledge. On this basis Lonergan can answer that what man knows and seeks to know is *being.* Being, in the present context, is defined as the objective of the pure desire to know,[3] a definition which requires some clarification. This definition does not flow from an insight in the sense that a concept or hypothesis proceeds from an insight as an intelligible emanation. Since being is whatever is or can be known, an insight into being would be an understanding of everything about everything. Lacking such a universal insight, one must form a second order definition, i.e., consider the *notion* of being, not the concept in the sense of a *'verbum.'* This second-order definition does not define the meaning of the term 'being,' but rather shows how the meaning is to be assigned. One may call a 'being' whatever is known through intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation.

Frolll this definition the general characteristics proper to the notion of being may be determined. Since being is whatever can be known, the notion of being is completely unrestricted. Stemming from the dynamic orientation of the mind, the attitude of 'wonder' with which Aristotle began his metaphysics, the notion of being precedes cognition and judgment. Yet it goes beyond the known or even the merely thought and aspires to existing reality, i.e., what would be attained through the totality of correct judgments. It is all-pervasive, underpinning and penetrating all cognitional contents and constituting them as cognitional. It is the core of all meaning, for in an act of

• *Insight,* p. 348.

meaning we intend to state what is-and whatever is, is being. Since the notion of being underpins and penetrates all cognitional contents it can be neither univocal nor equivocal, but is analogous. It is not an abstract notion, for it does not prescind from anything knowable. It is, rather, a concrete notion, for the drive to know reaches a partial completion only in judgment and achieves its ultimate fulfillment by knowing all there is to know; and this is being.[4]

Lonergan compares this notion of being with various other explanations of being elaborated by Parmenides, Plato, Aristotle, various scholastic philosophers, and Hegel.[5] He concludes that his theory is the same as St. Thomas' though it differs from the view Cajetan attributed to St. Thomas. Cajetan defined being in terms of the unity of a function of variable contents. The contents are essence and existence. The unity is the relation of what is conceived to its being affirmed. While this theory applies to individual concrete beings it is inadequate to explain the totality of being.

•Jn Verbum-1, 391 ff. he explained essentially the same concept of being (without distinguishing between concept and notion) through a somewhat different approach based on the meaning of possibility. An *act* is objective when it does occur; possible when it can occur. A *potency* is objective when the corresponding act is possible. Accordingly, the objectivity of a potency is the condition of the possibility of an act. The corresponding condition for the possibility of a potency is its intelligibility. As this analysis is applied to being, a being is possible when it is intelligible. The transition from the affirmation of the possibility of a being to the affirmation of its actuality is dependent upon experience and is posited in a judgment. The concepts which are fused in this judgment presuppose the concept of being, for any concept is a concept of some thing, i.e., of .some being. Accordingly, the concept of being is implicitly included in every other concept and judgment and can not be explained in terms of any other prior concept or judgment. 'Vhat is prior to the concept of being is some act of understanding through which the intelligibility of a being is grasped. The concept of being is, accordingly, nothing but a conceptualization of intelligibility as such, i. e., a realization of the intelligibility potential in objects and actualizable by the mind. It follows from this analysis that the denial of this concept, i.e., the affirmation of the complete unintelligibility of an object is implicitly a self-contradiction. On this basis we can understand St. Thomas' immediate derivation of the principle of non-contradiction from the concept of being (" fundatur supra rationem entis et non entis") in S. T. I-II, q. 94, a. 2, c.

• *Insight,* chap. xii, sec. 7.

One more notion requires clarification before developing metaphysics, the notion of *objectivity.*[6] This complex notion can be distinguished into various aspects. The *principal* notion of objectivity is found in a patterned context of judgments. One defines, for example, objects A, B, C, ... through the correctness of a set of judgments: A is; B is; C is; A is neither B nor C; B is neither C norD, etc. The distinctive features of this explanation are its emphasis on a pattern of judgments and its explicit acceptance of the fact that the knower is within being, not a subject apart looking at being. He affirms himself by substituting " I am " for " A is."

Besides this principal notion there are various partial aspects. *Absolute* objectivity is proper to an individual judgment-" I am sitting." Its ground is the virtually unconditioned grasped by reflective understanding and posited in judgment. Absolute objectivity is basic in the sense that the principal notion of objectivity derives its validity from the set of absolute judgments it involves. Yet it is the pattern of judgments, rather than an individual judgment that is required to posit, distinguish, and relate being. *Normative* objectivity is another partial aspect emphasizing the fact that the proper and immanent norm of objectivity is the unfolding of the pure desire to know. Finally there is *experiential* objectivity, which is simply "the given " of experience and thought taken in its broadest and most undifferentiated sense.

It should be noted that Lonergan has not yet attempted to determine what is actually objective. He has simply noted the fact that we do make judgments of objectivity, and he has tried to explain, through the recondite art of implicit definition, various aspects of the notion of objectivity. The only position excluded is the supposition that inquiry and reflection, intelligence and reasonableness, have nothing to do with objectivity, that what is really objective is the unquestioned immediately given of experience.

Lonergan's development of metaphysics is a precisely ordered

• *Ibid.,* chap. xiii.

and carefully elaborated unfolding of the implications of his cognitional analysis. It can be judged only on the basis of a detailed study of his development, not on the basis of a summary outline. Accordingly, we are not primarily interested in reproducing his development here, but are concerned with showing how his explanation of understanding functions in the development of metaphysics. The cornerstone of his development is the realization that any philosophical formulation which implicitly contradicts the laws immanent and operative in cognitional processes inevitably involves a philosopher in incoherence. Such a formulation either leads to its own reversal or disguises its incoherence in an obscurantism garbed in the pseudo-profoundity of ultimately meaningless questions. If this is so, it is eminently reasonable to avoid such counterpositions from the beginning and develop an explicit metaphysics which is an intelligent and critical elaboration of the metaphysics implicit in our way of knowing. For this reason any development in accord with the basic positions on knowing, on being, and on objectivity already established is called a *'position,'* in contrast to the various *'counterpositions.'*

Metaphysics is the science of being. The notion of being underlies, penetrates, and goes beyond all other notions. Accordingly, metaphysics is the department of human knowledge that underlies, penetrates, transforms and unifies all other departments. If one defines 'proportional being' as being proportionate to human knowing through experience, intelligent grasp, and reasonable affirmation, then one can define metaphysics so that it is simply an expansion of the basis found in cognitional theory: " Now let us say that explicit metaphysics is the conception, affirmation, and implementation of the integral heuristic structure of proportionate being." [7]

A heuristic notion, as previously explained in I, is the notion of an unknown content which is determined by anticipating the type of act through which the unknown would become known. An heuristic structure is the ordered set of heuristic

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 391.

notions. An integral heuristic structure is the ordered set of all heuristic notions. A metaphysics developed in accord with this definition would be materially dependent on the sciences and on common sense, for these supply the instances of knowing proper to the polymorphic consciousnes of man. It would be formally dependent on cognitional theory which exhibits the invariant structure found in all knowing. It would be heuristic inasmuch as metaphysics supplies the empty forms which science and common sense fill.

A syllogism is an apt tool for exposing the skeletal outline of his methodical development. The major premise simply establishes the isomorphism that obtains between the invariant structure of the knowing and the composition of the known. Lonergan summarizes this premise:

> If the knowing consists of a related set of acts and the known is the related set of the contents of these acts, then the pattern of the relation between the acts is similar in form to the pattern of the relations between the contents of these acts. This premise is analytic.[8]

The minor of his expository syllogism is subdivided into a *primary minor premise,* a series of affirmations of concrete and recurring structures in the knowing of the self-affirming subject, and a *secondary minor premise,* which is supplied by scientific and common-sense knowledge, after they have been properly reoriented.

What sort of conclusions flow from this supple syllogism? The structure of all knowing of proportionate being involves experience, intelligent grasp, and reasonable affirmation. A corresponding trilogy must obtain in the proportionate known, both the presently known and whatever would be known in a full explanation of the whole domain of proportionate being. With respect to this fully explanatory knowledge heuristically anticipated one may define *'potency'* as the component of proportionate being to be known in fully explanatory knowledge by an intellectually patterned experience of the empirical

[8] *Ibid.,* p. 899.

residue. It is the component of being isomorphic to experience (in Lonergan's technical sense of 'experience') , not nude experience, but experience as a constitutive part of full knowledge. Similarly *'form* ' denotes the component of proportionate being to be known by understanding things fully in their relation to one another. Finally, *'act'* denotes the component of proportionate being to be known by uttering the virtually unconditioned 'Yes ' of reasonable affirmation. As the three levels of cognitional activity yield a single knowing, so potency, form and act constitute a single thing, for one and the same thing is experienced, understood, and affirmed.

The elements of metaphysics have been defined in accord with our way of knowing. But we can know things in two significantly different ways: The abstract laws of science express a knowledge of things *as they are related to other things.* To know a thing precisely *as a thing* is to grasp and affirm it as a unity, identity, whole. The isomorphism which serves as a major in the development of metaphysics demands a corresponding duality in the elements of metaphysics. In considering both types of elements it is convenient to begin with form, for it is the form that is understood and specified by a definition.

'Central' form corresponds to the concrete and intelligible unity grasped in understanding a thing and required to understand change. Central act is existence, for this is what is affirmed. Since central form is the intelligible uriity of data as individual, central potency may be identified with the individuality of the empirical residue.

Classical scientific method leads to the formulation and verification of abstract propositions which express in a systematic way the relation of things to other things. These empirically verified explanatory relations implicitly define terms which are grasped by understanding and may be called' *conjugate forms.'* The corresponding conjugate act is *occurrence,* for this is what is verified in a judgment affirming the relations defining a conjugate form. Since these forms are verified in spatia-tern-

poral continua, connections, and successiotts, these aspects of the empirical residue are called the conjugate potency.

The conclusions derived in this novel way may be compared with the traditional scholastic doctrines on act and potency. The 'central form ' as defined above is essentially the same as the ' substantial form ' of the Aristotelian- Thomistic tradition, and central potency and act basically are the same as prime matter and the act of existence. 'Conjugate form,' however, differs from the standard Aristotelian- Thomistic doctrine of ' accidental form.' The reason is that Aristotle's understanding of accidental form was derived from descriptive knowledge while Lonergan's explanation of conjugate form is based on explanatory knowledge. A similar disparity holds for Lonergan's explanation of conjugate potency and act.

This completes our survey of Lonergan's approach to metaphysics. His further development of these elements requires a consideration of other types of understanding, which we are now in a position to treat.

Genetic and Dialectical Understanding

The isomorphism that obtains between knowing and the known, and the dynamic orientation impelling man from experience to full knowing suggest a corresponding dynamism impelling potency to a succession of higher forms and acts. An explanation of this general topic involves not only different genera and species but their ordered interrelation as well. In his treatment of genetic understanding, Lonergan attempts to explicate and systematize the cognitional methods and tools spontaneously used in treating such a problem. He begins with a doctrine of genera and species based on explanatory conjugates and heuristic anticipations, rather than descriptive knowledge. The conjugate forms proper to this type of knowing are implicitly defined not only by the explanatory relations heuristically anticipated but also by the possible schemes of recurrence. To explain these Lonergan uses a language and

methodology appropriated from the mathematical set theory.[9] Instead of summarizing his development in its full generality we shall concentrate on the simplest case and try to communicate the basic ideas involved.

A collection of atoms may simply be juxtaposed or may form a molecule. The first instance involves a simple coincidence of conjugate acts; the atoms simply happen to be near each other. In the molecular case an otherwise coincidental manifold of lower conjugate acts invite the higher integration effected by a higher conjugate form. In other words, this higher form emerges and is grasped by a distinct act of understanding.[10] Obviously, the new form must correspond to the disposition of the manifold being integrated.

A generalization of this and similar examples leads to the idea of *development,* a flexible, linked sequence of dynamic and increasingly differentiated higher integrations that meet the tension of successively transformed underlying manifolds through successive applications of the principles of correspondence and emergence. Just as an act of understanding is needed to grasp each specific form, so a special type of understanding is needed to grasp the regularity of events or conjugate acts and the schemes of possible recurrence relating the sequence of systems. This may be called genetic understanding. It leads to concepts, definitions, and hypotheses which are subject to verification through a judgment on the evidence that supports them.

Among the various hypotheses generated by Lonergan's genetic understanding the most interesting is the one concerning *integrators* and *operators.* A system is integrated through the emergence of a new conjugate form in an otherwise coincidental manifold. The upwardly directed dynamism of being which metaphysics calls finality is now conditioned by the instability of the underlying manifold and the incompleteness of the integration that unifies it. Accordingly, the newly inte-

[9] *Ibid.,* chap. xv. sect. 3.

[10] *Ibid.,* chap. xv. sect. 6. Rather surprisingly he says nothing about the emergence of ceutral forms in this context.

grated system becomes an operator striving, through the principles of correspondence and emergence, for its own replacement through a more specific and effective integration. Through the use of such concepts and principles genetic understanding can grasp the intelligible sequence linking the emergence of an atom from sub-atomic particles, of a molecule from atoms; the dynamic interrelation linking physical, vegetable, sensitive and intelligent forms in a hierarchical sequence; and the natural processes operative in the intellectual and spiritual growth of man individually and collectively. Lonergan, to be sure, does not attempt an explanation of these various interrelations. But he does suggest cognitional tools which he considers appropriate for anyone who wishes to make such an attempt.

Dialectical method and understanding is treated intermittently in *Insight* as the moving point of view suggests various pertinent elements and aspects. In gathering these scattered threads we shall begin with a simple example which affords a basis for the requisite insight, show how this is generalized in dialectical method, and then point out special uses of this method in *Insight.*

In the development of knowledge one desires not merely understanding of isolated things or fragmentary aspects of things; one naturally desires a coherence in understanding. Logic may be defined as the effort of knowledge to attain the coherence and organization proper to any stage of its development. 'Vhat happens when such an effort to achieve coherence leads to frustration rather than unified intelligibility? The dynamism of man's mind struggling to comprehend reality strives to bring to birth a new and higher stage of integration in which the lower level conflicts and tensions can be resolved. Such striving is an integral part of the life history of the individual and the race, and manifests itself in dialogue, in the conflict of philosophical positions and in the very history of human developments. Dialectical method is simply an attempt to explicate in an intelligent and critical manner the method

immanent and operative in this type of human thinking.[11] This, it should be noted, differs from the dialectic of Hegel, a conceptual system which seeks to impose necessary solutions upon reality.[12] Lonergan is simply explicating a general form which is applicable to any pure unfolding of linked but opposed principles that are modified cumulatively by their unfolding. This supplies the general form of a critical attitude which is worked out differently in different fields.

Perhaps the significance of this method can best be seen by considering the dialectic that pervades every account of cognitional analysis Lonergan gives. An animal knows, not merely phenomena, but real existing bodies: the cat knows the mouse; the dog knows the bone, etc. Sense knowledge, in other words, admits of its own sense-level integration. Man, as simple reflection reveals, is also capable of such a sense-level integration (through what St. Thomas called the *'sensus communis').* In addition to this sense-level integration there is also a specifically human intellectual way of knowing, which involves asking questions, obtaining insights, reflecting, and judging. This higher level of operation neither denies nor excludes the sense-level integration. Rather it uses it as a matter on which the intellect operates.

Few, unfortunately, have the critical cognitional insight required to grasp this distinction and its practical significance. Sense-level integration has the immediacy and directness of experience as simply given. Prior to questioning, it is also prior to doubt. There is, accordingly, an easy and almost automatic tendency to accept the sensitive integration of sensitive data as man's most basic knowledge of reality, the ultimate standard of judgment and evaluation. Such an acceptance generates its own metaphysics, an implicit metaphysics which passes for hard-headed realism. Reality, in this metaphysics, is a collection of bodies which are simply thought of as ' already out

[11] A brief explanation of dialectical method is given on p. 244. The use of this method is basic to the development of chap. xvii.

[12] This difference is explained on pp. 421-2.

there.' Man know them by the simple direct process *of'* taking a look.' 1\:Ian, to be sure, can ask questions, raise doubts, and propose theories. But these are to be resolved by checking the conclusion with the reality already known. Such an attitude engenders what Lonergan designates "the flight from understanding." A campaign against this flight is one *of* the basic purposes *of Insight.*

Lonergan's own position on this matter can be most concisely explained through the terms developed in the last section. An insight is the grasp *of* an intelligible unity in an otherwise coincidental manifold *of* sense-data. The integration is on a new and higher level which can not be explained by resolution to the constitutive parts integrated. Yet, through the principles *of* emergence and correspondence, the newly grasped intelligible form is consistent with the material dispositions present in the manifold of sense data. For every integrator there is an operator. The operator of intelligence is the detached, disinterested desire to know. Other motives may influence the action of the individual: desire for success, financial advantages associated with increased knowledge, etc. Such motives are not immanent in the knowing process and, if they are dominant, can only serve to distort normal development, directing it away from its proper goal, a unified understanding of whatever is to be understood.

A sense-level integration can supply the matter that intelligence probes and seeks to understand. But it is radically and totally incapable of answering the questions set by intelligence. True intellectual progress requires not only a critical and explicit recognition of this but also a strict adherence to the implications of this recognition. Lonergan has stressed this through a dialectical development, repeatedly contrasting the two opposed ideas of knowledge, sensitive integration regarded as primary and the implementation of the pure desire to know. Thus, there was the contrast between *body,* the 'already out there now real' known by 'taking a look,' and *thing,* which depends in a critical way on the process of questions, in-

sights, hypotheses, and reasoning.[13] Self-knowledge is developed through the same dialectic. Man can be thought of as 'knowing' himself through a pre-intellectual awareness, by somehow intuiting or perceiving himself. When one seeks to reconcile the duality of seer and seen implicit in this view with the unity of conscious awareness he encounters such insoluble pseudo-profundities as: "How can man, as subject, intuit himself as object? " If however, one uses 'know' with a realization of the three-tiered structure it implies, then man knows himself, as he knows anything else, through intelligent and reasonable self-affirmation. Such an affirmation does not exclude conscious awarenes of self as subject, but simply insists on judgment as the ultimate criterion of reality.[14] Similarly, there are two notions of objectivity: one based on a comparison of knowledge with the given of pre-intellectual experience; and one which bases objectivity on a patterned context of judgments.

Man, as a philosopher, is not immune from the oversights and misunderstandings proper to man as an individual. Thus, the contrast between a naive and a critical attitude toward knowing finds its metaphysical counterpart in the dialectic which obtains between positions and counter-positions. Since both have entered the history of thought the abstract possibility of a dialectic emerges as a dialogue between different philosophers and philosophical traditions. Dialectical understanding is a general form enabling one to place various philosophies by determining their fundamental positions and counter-positions, tracing the development of positions and the tendency of counterpositions to bring about their own reversal.[15]

[13] *Ibid.,* chap. viii.

[14] *Ibid.,* chap. xi.

[15] Lonergan generally attributes to Scotus the transition from the position, as given by St. Thomas, to the counter position and feels that the influence of this transition in the subsequent interpretation of St. Thomas is far from negligible. In *Insight,* chap. xiv, sect. 4, he used the dialectical method to trace the further development of these two opposed stands. Empiricism presents the most explicit statement of the basic counter-position and warrants the harsh appraisal: "Empiricism, successive clarification " (p. 412).

Now that we have outlined Lonergan's teaching on genetic and dialectical understanding we may consider the manner in which the various types of understanding are integrated in his metaphysics-centered synthesis.[16] His mode of development is schematized in the military metaphor of a break-through, an envelopment, and a confinement. The break-through is one's affirmation of self as empirically, intelligently, and rationally consciOus. This self-affirmation-! am a knower-breaks through the previous exclusive concentration of processes of knowing and affirms a knowing being. This in turn leads to the envelopment through the protean notion of being as whatever is known through intelligent grasp and reasonable affirmation. The confinement is effected through the dialectical opposition of the twofold notions of the real, of knowing, and of objectivity. On this dialectical basis one can divide the formulations of human intelligence into positions, which invite development, and counter-positions which invite reversal. The integral heuristic structure of proportionate being which Lonergan erects on this foundation can be analyzed into four moments.

1. Dialectical criticism transforms common-sense and science to provide the secondary minor premise in the expository syllogism given earlier. The transformation in question does not mean that the metaphysician attempts to change science or direct the work of the scientist. What it does imply is that the metaphysician abstracts from the work of the scientist instances of insight, heuristic structures, and developed system which reveal man's characteristic ways of knowing in their proper complexity.

2. Cognitional analysis brings to light four methods of possible inquiry, the conditions of their use, and the possibility of their integration. These four methods are not listed as an arbitrary selection, but as a critical explication of the ways in which the mind of man actually functions in attempting to penetrate the significance of the data of experience.

[18] *Ibid.,* chap. xv, sect. 8.

Understanding leads to the formulation of systems. Heuristic method anticipates the finding of such systems in strategically selected data. Cognitional analysis of such heuristic systems allows a convenient and natural classification and an explanation of the significance of the different types of systems. Thus, if one anticipates a constant system to be discovered, he is employing the method previously explained as *classical* method. The anticipation of a related sequence of systems is *genetic* method. The anticipation that data will not conform to a system grounds *statistical* method. Finally, the anticipation that successive stages of a changing system will not be directly intelligible grounds *dialectical* method. Any orderly attempt to understand can fit into <>ne of these four procedures. Suppose, however, that a man anticipates nothing and simply looks at the data. Such a simple unquestioning acceptance makes the emergence of any insight a fortuitous, isolated, and relatively ineffective event.

Besides these methods of knowing data in terms of general structures and abstract systems there is also the grasp of data as individual. This requires a distinctive type of understanding, one that grasps concrete unities, identities, wholes. This type of understanding was explained in the previous discussion of 'things.' These five ways of understanding constitute the principal minor premise of the expository syllogism.

3. Metaphysical understanding unites the principal and secondary minor premises to obtain the integral heuristic structure of the universe. Though an integral heuristic structure is the anticipatory outline of what would be known by affirming a complete explanation of experience, its significance does not lie in some remote future when these anticipations may be fulfilled. Its significance, rather, lies in the present, in an explicit acceptance and critical deployment of the order immanent in any knowing, past, present, or future.

4. The final moment establishes the isomorphism that obtains between the knowing and the known. The pattern of relations immanent in the structure of cognitional acts, present

or anticipated, must be found in the contents of these acts as they occur. It follows that the structure of the known is isomorphic to the structure of the knowing. Accordingly, Lonergan denotes by 'act' what is known inasmuch as one understands; and by 'potency' what is known inasmuch as one experiences the empirical residue. Thus, the basic structure of the known is obtained.

To the distinctive type of understanding that grasps the unity, identity, whole in data corresponds central form, which has a corresponding act and potency. The various methods of understanding data express the relations of things to other things. These relations implicitly define terms which are grasped as conjugate forms, with their appropriate acts and potency. Finally, the structural unification of these methods by generalized emergent probability leads to the structural account of explanatory genera and species, and ultimately to the immanent order of the universe of proportionate being.

The method of developing metaphysics outlined here is, Lonergan admits, not the one followed by Aristotle, Aquinas, or Scholastics in general. Yet, he feels, it leads to essentially the same metaphysical elements. Moreover, the new method achieves these results without making Aristotelian physics a mummy to be preserved incorrupt and rendered unceasing and uncritical veneration.

Transcendent Knowledge

"Thoroughly understand what it is to understand, and not only will you understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood but also you will possess a fixed base, and invariant pattern, opening upon all further developments of understanding." [17] The rich variety of subjects integrated into a unified synthesis in the remainder of *Insight* vindicates and fulfills this promise. As one would expect from the preceeding development, Lonergan is more concerned with methods and patterns of understanding than with factual details. Thus the science of

[17] *Ibid.*, p. xxvii.

metaphysics is explained with an emphasis on the power of a method rather than the details of development.[18] The relation of metaphysics to pre-metaphysical thought is explained by a skillful use of genetic and dialectic method in which Lonergan shows how self-knowledge and a consequent metaphysics develops from the confused mythic consciousness, which is essentially the absence of critical self-knowledge.[19]

In a subsequent section Lonergan gives a general theory of interpretation and canons for a methodical hermeneutics.[20] He feels that these canons should exercise a function in interpretation analogous to that of mathematics in the physical sciences. The basis of these canons in Lonergan's explanation of understanding and the conclusion flowing from it that in any interpretation of a document, whether the document be an ancient one or the text of a fellow philosopher, the proximate source of meaning lies in the interpreter's own experience, understanding and judgment. His discussion of the basis of ethics extends his previous analysis from rational and intelligent consciousness to moral self-consciousness.[21]

These developments and others which we have not mentioned follow in a methodically ordered way from the unfolding of the pure desire to know and lead to the most fundamental problem that intelligence faces. This is the problem of an ultimate understanding of reality or a higher viewpoint in which the specialized and limited aspects of knowing and being are unified in an intelligible way. The isomorphism between knowing and the known implies the conclusion that the requisite higher viewpoint is a concrete possibility only as a consequence of an actual higher integration. This is a question of fact: is there such a higher integration? Any attempt to

[16] *Ibid.,* chap. xvi.

[19] *Ibid.,* chap. xvii, sect. 1.

[20] *Ibid.,* sect. 3.

[21] *Ibid.,* chap. xviii. I found his explanation of essential and effective freedom the most intelligible treatment of this problem I've ever read. Unfortunately, a summary of this would lead us somewhat astray from the central theme of this study.

answer this question leads the questioner out of the realm of proportionate being and into the realm of transcendent being.

Lonergan's treatment of transcendent knowledge involves not only a carefully articulated and methodically developed extension of human knowing into the realm of the transcendent, but also a survey of the implications of the affirmations of a transcendent being.[22] Since our primary concern here is with the completion of his explanation of understanding we shall expose the nerve of the argument. It may be summarized in four steps:

I. Being is intelligible. Being is the object of the pure desire to know and, in fact, we do know. What is unknowable is non-being.

2. An explanation confined to the realm of proportionate being reduces being to unintelligibility. This may be seen from a consideration of causality, considering causality the objective counterpart of the questions asked by the detached and disinterested desire to know. The attempt to understand the given leads to questions concerning internal and external causes. The answer to these questions is had only in a judgment affirming the virtually unconditioned. The objective correlative of such a judgment is existence or occurrence. Either this existence or occurrence simply happens or it is explicable through some further cause. H it simply happens then the question of the intellect is unanswered; the virtually unconditioned is not reached; reasonable judgment is impossible; and being is simply not known. In a word, mere matter of fact is nothing.

H this existence or occurrence is explicable it is so either through other proportionate beings or through transcendent being. However, proportionate beings are virtually unconditioned. That is, they are conditioned and can be affirmed only

•• This summary is from chap. xix, " General Transcendent Knowledge." Chap. xx, "Special Transcendent Knowledge" is a pre-apologetics based on the problem of evil and presenting a heuristic structure of the solution. The arguments given are, to some extent, a modem statement of the considerations given by St. Thomas in *Summa Contra Gentiles,* I, cc. 3-9, and *S. T.,* 1-11, q. 109.

when their conditions are fulfilled. To remain in this realm, accounting for one happening by another, is simply to change the topic without meeting the issue. Accordingly, if being is to be intelligible one must go beyond the realm of proportionate being.

3. Some of the attributes which a transcendent being must have can be determined. This does not involve a special intuition of a peculiar way of knowing. It is simply a process of asking questions and demanding intelligible and reasonable answers. Metaphysical analysis led to the conclusion that proportionate being is radically unintelligible unless there is an ultimate intelligible integration in act. By a transcendent being the metaphysician, who is following the way of analysis, means the being who supplies the basis for this integration. That is, the transcendent being must be an unrestricted act of understanding. This may be considered both from the viewpoint of the understood and also from that of the act of understanding.

From the viewpoint of the understood, what is understood is being. Being is completely universal and completely concrete. An understanding of being must be an unrestricted act that understands everything about everything. This lack of restriction means that the act is not in the domain of proportionate being, and is, by definition, transcendent.

A consideration of this act with respect to the understanding itself must be based on a realization of what it means to understand. The basic counter-position, which equivalently considers knowing as an intellectual looking at reality, logically requires an ultimate duality between the knowing and the known. On the position, however, that knowing is knowing being, the ultimate question is, not the duality of knowing and known, but the significance of 'intelligible.'

Intelligibility may be either material, or spiritual, or abstract.[23] Material intelligibility is proper to anything that can

[23] These different types of intelligibility are explained in chap. xvi, sect. 4. 8. Their application to the present problem is on p. 674.

be known through experience, understanding, and judgment, but which does not itself understand or judge. Besides the potential, formal, and actual intelligibility of what is known there is a potential, formal and actual knowing. This intelligibility that is also intelligent is called spiritual. Abstract intelligibility reveals the correspondence between the material intelligibility that is understood and the spiritual intelligibility that is understanding.

Direct understanding abstracts from the empirical residue. Accordingly, the empirical residue is what material intelligibility includes and spiritual intelligibility excludes. Since the metaphysical equivalent of the empirical residue is prime potency, prime potency is prime matter. It follows that the spiritual is that which is neither constituted nor conditioned intrinsically by the empirical residue, i.e., by matter.

If we examine the notion of an unrestricted act of understanding in the light of these considerations, it is clear that such an unrestricted act can not be material intelligibility. This is necessarily incomplete since it is grounded _in the empirical residue. Nor can it be abstract intelligibility, for this, by the very process of abstracting, is necessarily incomplete. Nor, finally can an unrestricted act of understanding be the type of spiritual intelligibility that inquires, for this implies incompleteness and restriction. Accordingly, the unrestricted act of understanding must be a spiritual intelligibility which possesses an unrestricted understanding without any change from potency to act. Such an unrestricted act must be unrestricted intelligibility as well as unrestricted intelligence. Because of this twofold unrestrictedness it is possible to distinguish between the primary component in the idea of being, which is identical with this restricted act's understanding of itself, and a secondary component, whatever else is understood. Since the primary component is both unrestricted intelligibility and unrestricted intelligence, the intelligibility and intelligence must, if they are to be truly unrestricted, be completely identical. It follows that the secondary component is

understood, not by abstraction or deduction, but in the single simple act of perfect identity by which the unrestricted intelligence grasps itself as unrestricted. Such a being is traditionally called God.

4. The final step is the affirmation of the existence of God. The attempt to understand the beings of experience has led to the hypothesis of God as the ultimate explanation of intelligibility. "Does God exist?" is a question to be answered, not by an analysis of the meaning of the terms, but only by reflective understanding which grasps the statement, "God exists," as virtually unconditioned. This is summarized in a syllogism in which the major links the conditioned (not God's existence, but our statement of His existence) to its conditions while the minor affirms these conditions.

> "If the real is completely intelligible, God exists.
> But the real is completely intelligible.
> Therefore, God exists." [24]

The argument supporting the major was given under (3). The proof of the minor is essentially a capping of the development up to this point. Being is intelligible, for being is what is known by correct understanding. And being is completely intelligible, for it is known completely only when all intelligent questions are answered. This complete coincidence of the real and the intelligible is the ultimate consequence flowing from an acceptance of the basic position and a rejection of the basic counterposition. With this achievement of complete intelligibility-at least in its radical principle-Lonergan has fulfilled the promise he made to his readers some seven hundred pages earlier: thoroughly understand what it is to understand and you will understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood.

With this achievement the analytic process, resolution of knowledge to its ultimate intrinsic and extrinsic principles, has been completed. The terminal point of the analytic process

[24] *Ibid.,* p. 672.

should, in its turn, serve as the starting point of the synthetic process, a unified understanding of reality in terms of the ultimate principles attained by analysis. Such a synthetic process is merely sketched in *Insight.* The reason for this apparent neglect seems to be, not Lonergan's failure to recognize the need for such a synthetic understanding, but his hope of achieving it on a higher level, of effecting a theological synthesis.

Theological Understanding

The monumental theological and philosophical synthesis elaborated by Thomas Aquinas remains a peak which human thought has rarely approached and never surpassed. Yet, in many essential respects traditional Thomism does not meet the needs of our time. Its philosophy has not adequately integrated modern advances in knowledge, nor even presented a fully satisfactory self-justification in the light of the contemporary critical problem. Its theology, at present, is somewhat fragmented, with Scripture, Patristics, speculative and moral theology in separate compartments. A modern synthesis must not only integrate these and other elements; it must also include in its very structure an explicit recognition of the dynamic development of human understanding, individual and collective, responsible for these advances.

Effecting such a synthesis is, in Lonergan's view, essentially a question of methodology, a methodology which recognizes, distinguishes, and unifies the diverse modes through which human understanding develops. To get some glimpse of this, the ultimate goal towards which the works and writings of Lonergan seem to be directed, we must consider his explanation of theological understanding. Theology, in the Catholic tradition presupposes revelation, a radically new source of information, and faith, an infused virtue by which one assents to revealed truth. It also introduces distinctive problems of understanding, our sole concern here. Lonergan, a dogmatic theologian by profession, has made a significant contribution to the problem of understanding the nature of theological under-

standing. We shall endeavor to summarize his views briefly and then indicate their pertinence to the project, whether real or conjectural, of an all-inclusive synthesis. [25]

To limit this exposition we shall focus on Lonergan's explanation of one problem which arches over all other theological problems, the problem of doctrinal development. It is an accepted historical fact that many distinctively Catholic doctrines were not explicitly taught in Scripture or in the early Church. The existence of seven and only seven sacraments of divine institution was made explicit, for the first time, about the year 1145 in the *Sententiae Divinitatis* of the school of Gilbert of Poitiers. The clear distinction between the natural and the supernatural, so basic to contemporary Catholic theology, was not formally taught before 1230. Even such fundamental Christian doctrines as the Trinity and divinity of Christ were defined by the Church through such technical terms as nature, person and "*homoousion*" foreign to the Semitic style so evident in Scripture.

Such developments present no serious problem to the Modernist, who claims that these doctrines simply evolved, nor for many neo-orthodox Protestants, who would consider many of these developments to be corruptions of the pristine revelation. The Catholic theologian, however, must not only accept such developments, but must also reconcile them with the beliefs that public revelation ended with the death of the last Apostle and that defined dogma is completely coherent with revelation. The solution, universally accepted at least in a generic way, is that the development in question is basically a development in understanding, bringing what is implicitly and virtually rPvealed into the focus of explicit awareness and commitment. It is a question of transposition and equivalence: transposition from a mode of thinking proper to Scripture to

[25] Lonergan's explanation of theological understanding may be found in the *50* page introduction to *Divinarum Personarum,* in his article, "Theology and Understanding," *Gregorianum,* XXXV (1954), 633-48, and through analysis of his treatment of particular theological problems.

one proper to theology; equivalence between the basic doctrinal content of the two modes.

Lonergan has developed an arsenal of conceptual tools for attacking problems of understanding. He brings them all to bear on. the nature of theological understanding. He begins with the basic distinction between the "*an sit*" and the "*quid sit;*" the question of the true, to be answered in a judgment concerning the existence of the true, and the question of the intelligible to be met by theological understanding. [26] Theology is distinct from all other intellectual disciplines in its ordering of these two operations. In other sciences understanding of data leads to the formulation of hypotheses and theories and terminates in a judgment concerning the validity of laws and the limits of their application. A definitive judgment of dogma is beyond the competence of a private theologian. Such a judgment is made by the teaching Church and is based, not on a complete understanding of the truth defined, but on the authority of God revealing. The speculative theologian in the Catholic tradition begins by accepting a judgment of truth and seeks a deeper though still obscure understanding of the truth accepted on faith. More concisely, he accepts the answer to the question, "*an sit,*" and concentrates on the "*quid sit.*"

In theology, as in philosophy, one may distinguish between an *analytic* process, which proceeds from data to conclusions and pronounces on the truth of these conclusions, and a *synthetic* process, which seeks a unified understanding of the many through the one which is ontologically prior. Thus the terminal point of the analytic process serves as the starting point of the synthetic process, while the synthetic process, in its turn, adds a distinct formal intelligibility to the truths with which the analytic process commenced. Both processes are essentially concerned with the level of understanding, i. e., with the question of the *"quid sit,"* rather than with a definitive judgment of truth. Yet, both processes are related to a judgment of truth through the revealed truths which precede these

•• The significance of these two mental operations was treated in the first part of I.

processes and by the degree to which the conclusions flowing from theological understanding are consonant with the mind and doctrine of the Church.

In considering the noetic problems proper to each process and their interrelation we shall concentrate on one the one which Lonergan has treated in greatest detail, the development of the doctrine of the Trinity. Scripture and primitive tradition reflect, in general, a common sense (or "*quoad nos")* mode of understanding. The terms used are common, culture-connected, and non-technical. Things are considered primarily in terms of their relation to the subject, a Semitic subject with highly personalized categories of thought. Thus, God is presented, in G. Ernest Wright's apposite phrase, as "He who acts," the One who calls Abraham, chooses a people, speaks to the prophets, rewards and punishes his people. Similarly, the Trinity is presented primarily in terms of missions, The Father sending the Son into the world as its Redeemer, the Spirit as sent by the Father and Son to continue the work of redemption.

The development of Trinitarian doctrine through the Council of Nicea could be described as a transposition, often a troubled one, from a way of understanding based on common sense knowledge and familiar analogies to a way of understanding based on a precise statement of the central truth involved. In explaining this transposition as an analytic process, Lonergan utilizes his theory of knowledge to interpret the inner dynamics of the development. He does this, not by casting history in a pre-established mold, but by painstaking positive theology illuminated by his understanding of the psychological processes at work. Here, we shall neglect the positive theology and siphon off the noetic elements. [27]

The earliest discussions of the Trinity exhibit a peculiarly Semitic nominalism, in which a name (such as "Father") somehow represents a personality. The Gnostics initiated an abstract treatment of this subject based on their theory of

[27] The historical development of Trinitarian theory through the Council of Nicea is contained in Lonergan's *De Deo Trino: Pars Analytica,* pp. 13-113.

processions. Their theological aberrations induced many early Fathers to reject such a mode of explanation and the use of such abstract terms as *"homoousion"* (consubstantial) introduced by the Gnostics. Yet the drive to understand in a deeper way the doctrine believed on faith perdured and led to new attempts at explanation. The naive realism of Tertullian illustrates the early stage of this development. In explaining the distinction between the Father and the Son he placed excessive reliance on images: speaking a word, water from a font, light from the sun. These clarified the meaning of the generation of the Son but seemed incompatible with the unity of substance between the Two. The tension arising from such apparent contradictions is the dialectical spur goading theologians into new approaches.

Origen, conditioned by Alexandrian Neo-Platonism, purified Trinitarian thought of the materialism inherent in earlier more imaginative thinking by insisting on the spirituality of God and the spiritual generation of the Son. The Platonic notion of participation, which he used to explain this generation, carried, as a dissonant overtone, the implication that the Father is superior to the Son. Origen, who was not much of a metaphysician, could not clarify this difficulty. Arius attempted to do so by insisting that the Son is a super-creature essentially inferior to the Father.

St. Athanasius may be taken as the proper terminal point in analytic development. His method of reasoning, which is our concern here, may be summarized in four steps. First, he obtained his initial idea of consubstantiality from apt images. Secondly, he based the principles by which these ideas are explained on reason and faith. Third, he interpreted the images traditional to Trinitarian theory in the light of these principles. Finally, he concluded with a precise statement of the fundamental truth involved: everything which is said of the Father is also said of the Son, except the name Father. This decisive statement transcended the imaginative thinking and limited understanding of earlier attempts at explanation.

This was the doctrine taught by the Council of Nicea, that the Son is consubstantial with the Father. In this pronouncement, the Council implicitly taught a doctrine of critical realism, that truth is expressed in judgment. It also sanctioned, again implicitly, theological development proceeding according to the exigencies of the human mind: from the reliance on imaginative images used to generate some insight into the mysteries accepted on faith; through the limited understanding of things through their causes achieved with the aid of philosophical reasoning; to the definitive judgment in which a precise term is used to express the truth previously fragmented in varying images. Lonergan's earlier development of experience, insight, and judgment and his explanation of dialectical method generated heuristic anticipations which made it easier to understand the inner dynamics of this development. The success he has achieved is a concrete illustration of the power and frutifulness of his methodology.

Parallel, and to some extent intertwined, with the analytic process sketched above was the authentication of truth through the definitive judgment of the Church. This authentication supplies the truths basic to the synthetic process while analysis yields a partial understanding of these truths by its proper procedure of arguing from what is more manifest to what is more obscure. Thus, the synthetic process presupposes the existence of established dogma and the understanding proper to the analytic process.

Before examining the significance of the synthetic process for the problem we have been considering, a remark on the nature of the understanding to be sought is in order. In other sciences the analytic process proceeds, according to the Aristotelian ideal, by resolving the data. which serve as a starting point into their ultimate causes. The synthetic process starts with these ultimate causes, or with concepts whose understanding does not presuppose the understanding of something prior. The matter which the theologian treats, however, are mysteries, truths whose intrinsic intelligibility cannot be fully grasped.

Understanding of a mystery is necessarily analogical. Accordingly, though the theologian begins his synthetic process with concepts whose understanding does not formally presuppose the understanding of later elements, these concepts are, nevertheless, inadequate to the reality treated and can express it only in an obscure fashion.

The analytic process sketched above led to a body of Trinitarian truths. To follow a more or less chronological order, there was a gradual clarification and increased precision in the discussions of: the missions of the Son and Holy Spirit; the real distinction of the Three Persons; their consubstantiality; the personal properties and relative character of each; the foundation of personal relations in the processions; and finally the attempt to explain these processions by analogy with the processes of knowledge and love in man.

The terminal point of the analytic process serves as the starting point of the synthetic process, so that what is established through analysis receives an intelligent and systematic ordering through synthesis. Building on a definite scriptural foundation [28] as well as the works of St. Basil, St. Augustine, St. John Damascene and others, St. Thomas Aquinas developed an explanation of the Trinity based on his profound insight into the psychological operations which served as an analogy to the Trinitarian processions. [29] Thus, the generation of the Son is

[28] Because of the importance which the doctrine of intelligible emanation has in Lonergan's theology, as well as in his cognitional analysis, he is quite concerned with the scriptural equivalent of his teaching. This he finds especially in the New Testament use of " speak " and " hear." When used with respect to the preaching of truth, these terms do not refer primarily to sensation (" hearing, they have not heard") but to authoritative preaching and personal acceptance. This acceptance and commitment implies distinctive intellectual and volitional activities on the part of the recipient which can be explained as an intelligible emanation directed to the true and one directed to the good. These psychological overtones carry over into the scriptural account of the missions of the Son and Holy Spirit, and of their processions and suggest the need for a deeper understanding of these psychological processes through which the doctrine of the Trinity is communicated to men. This is treated in the *De Deo Trino: Pars Analytica*, pp. 304-16.

[29] St. Thomas' treatment may be found in his *Summa. Theol.*, I, qq. Lonergan's *Divinarum Personarum* has essentially the same development but recast

explained by analogy with the intelligible emanation of the inner word after this analogate has been properly purified.[30] In a similar way some understanding of the procession of the Holy Spirit is obtained through another psychological analogy.[31] On the basis of this limited, analogical, but nevertheless fruitful, understanding of the processions it is possible to explain, in a quasi-deductive way, the divine relations, the Persons and their properties, and the missions of the Son and Holy Spirit. Thus, the same mysteries are explained as in the analytic process but in the reverse order and with a different formal intelligibility. The missions, for example, terminate the synthetic process and through this process are understood in the light of more fundamental truths which precede them.

Inadequate as this outline certainly is, it may, nevertheless, serve to show the nature of theological understanding. In ordinary knowledge the moving object of direct understanding is the nature of the material body known, or the intelligibility grasped by insight into sensible data.[32] In theological understanding the moving object is God, as revealed and accepted by faith. Yet, He is understood in a finite act and through the medium of a finite object, an immanently produced term, such as the concepts of the intellectual and volitional operations basic to the Trinitarian analogy. Accordingly, theological understanding of a mystery is analogical knowledge, necessarily imperfect and obscure. Because of this obscurity, theological understanding can not ground analytic principles, nor even a theological hypothesis whose intrinsic possibility is clearly and perfectly understood.

These imperfections notwithstanding, the synthetic process

to clarify the points obsured by misinterpretations of the psychological foundation which Thomas used.

[30] The principles involved are treated in I, 6-13.

[31] We have not explained the psychological process which serve as an analogy for this procession. It is in his treatment of this question *(Divinarum Personarum*, Quaest. IV), that Lonergan shows the sharpest disagreement with the traditional interpretation of St. Thomas, a tradition which may change under the impact of his cogent reasoning.

[32] This was treated in I, 11.

in theology fulfills, though in an analogous way, the Aristotelian ideal of a science, a knowledge of things through their causes. As such, it is distinct from positive theology, which is primarily concerned with a study of the sources of faith, and from the analytic process which possesses its own distinctive mode of understanding, its own formally distinct concepts, and its own manner of proving and refuting. The proper purpose of the synthetic process is not the establishment of truth but a deeper and more unified understanding of the truths previously established. Its fundamental concepts are, not the common sense concepts used in the fonts of theology, but concepts whose formal intelligibility does not presuppose an understanding of higher concepts. It is here that philosophical understanding is most fruitfully employed and integrated into a higher synthesis. The theological understanding attained is, of itself, neither true nor false, for these predicates are proper to judgment not understanding. Yet, theological understanding is related to the true inasmuch as it is derived from revealed truths, or at least coherent with them, and through the acceptance of theological theories by the Church.

The history of theology bears witness to a dialectic between these two processes. In the patristic period the analytic mode was primary, leading through the strife of heresy to the analysis and decisive formulation of the basic Christian truths. In the scholastic period the synthetic mode was dominant, expressing itself in syntheses and theological *"Summae."* Contemporary Catholic theology evidences a mixture of both ways.

Exclusive reliance on either method can generate aberrations, especially when one fails to distinguish between the search for certitude and the search for understanding. Thus, the laudable return to the Scriptures and the Fathers, which has so enriched contemporary theology, can be vitiated by the subtle and sophisticated form of fundamentalism that would make Biblical modes of thought a norm for all time, or the quasi-Jansenistic mentality which would recast all theology in the mold of a Patristic type of analysis. Degenerate scholasticism, on the

other hand, concentrates on subtleties of the system or philosophical questions to the neglect of the truths the theological system synthesizes. A manualistic melange not based on a critical recognition of the fact that the analytic and synthetic processes have different ends, different formal objects, different formal concepts and different ways of treating proofs and adversaries can lead to confusion and a skeptical suspicion of theological understanding.

Besides these two classical processes in theology there is also a third way, the historical mode of understanding, which grasps the development of dogma as a dialectic of the two processes, and which provides the means necessary to avoid the aberrations listed above. The theologian following the historical-dialectical method studies the theological expressions proper to different cultures, patristic, scholastic, etc., and tries to transcend the limitations of these particular cultures to attain the elements which are prior in reality ("*priora quoad se*") and in all human understanding. This entails a complex of new problems: interpreting documents; studying trans-cultural processes, distinguishing the various theological movements, etc., many of which were treated in *Insight.* In this way it should be possible to effect a synthesis which not only integrates the different processes but also explains the development emerging from their dialectical opposition. Philosophy, the human sciences, and though in an indirect way, even the natural sciences could become component parts of such a synthesis without losing their relative autonomy. [33] Such a synthesis seems to be the ultimate goal inspiring the works and writings of Father Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.

EDWARD MAcKINNON, S.J.

Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

•• The relation of these subjects to theology was discussed in the Epilogue to *Insight.* For a discussion of these problems see also, F. E. Crowe, S. J., "The Origin and Scope of Bernard .Lonergan's *Insight, "Sciences Ecclesiastiques,* IX (1957), 263-95, esp. part III.

REVIEW ARTICLE

IN DEFENSE OF ETIENNE GILSON: CONCERNING A RECENT BOOK ABOUT THOMISTIC METAPHYSICS [1]

"THE attempt to proceed 'existentially' in the Gilsonian sense, is based upon a doctrinaire transformation of metaphysics into theology, a transformation which is applied by assuming knowledge concerning God in order to present the dubious interpretations of the *quinquae viae* as discoveries of His existence." Such is the conclusion of a contemporary critic of Gilson's concept of St. Thomas' philosophy. [2]

What is this "Gilsonian concept" so far as metaphysics and God are concerned? It is, according to this critic, the notion that God-*ipsum esse-is"* the true object of metaphysics." [3] Does Gilson hold this? Yes, if "object" be taken in the sense of *end,* definitely not if taken in the sense of *subject.* For Gilson expressly acknowledges "the distinction between natural theology, in which God is considered as cause of the subject of metaphysics (viz., being), and revealed theology (viz., Scripture), in which God Himself is the

[1] Thomas C. O'Brien, 0. P., Ph. D., *Metaphysics and the Existence of God: A Reflexion on the Question of God's Existence in Contemporary Thomistic Metaphysics,* Washington 17, D. C., *The Thomist Press,* 2nd printing, 1960. This book has been reviewed briefly by Fr. Joseph Owens, C. Ss. R., in *The New Scholasticism,* Vol. XXXVI, no. 2, April, 1962, pp. 2.50-253. More about this review later. (Also see note 2, below.)

[2] Fr. O'Brien, *op. cit.,* p. 262. In this paper I am primarily concerned with Section II of this book, entitled " The Question of God's Existence Among Contemporary Thomists," and, within this Section, I deal only with what I take to be the crux of the criticism that the author levels against the position of Etienne Gilson (and other Thomistic " existentialists ") as to the fundamental nature of the relationship between metaphysics and the existence of God. Fr. Owens' review has been objected to by Fr. William A. Wallace, 0. P. *(The New Scholasticism,* Vol. XXXVI, no. 4, Oct., 1962, pp. 529-531) as "misrepresenting Fr. O'Brien's teaching," and as "obscuring the basic issue at stake in the controversy," viz., the so-called Gilsonian School's misinterpretation of St. Thomas. Fr. Wallace's allegations are substantially the same as those of Fr. O'Brien. It is the object of this paper to assess their validity objectively.

[3] *Op. cit.,* p. 94.

very subject of that science." [4] And Gilson here cites St. Thomas' Commentary on Boethius' *De Trinitate* (V, 4), where this well-known distinction is made by the Angelic Doctor himself. True, Gilson does speak [5] of the "inner reordering of metaphysics by the final causality of its ultimate object" so that it becomes necessarily and by full right *scientia divina.* But he nowhere says that God becomes the very subject of metaphysics or of philosophical theology.

It is perfectly true, as Fr. O'Brien remarks, [6] that since God is attained as principle of the subject of metaphysics, viz., being-in-common, metaphysical knowledge concerning Him is formally and exclusively knowledge about Him as this principle. On this point, repeatedly stressed by the author, there should be no disagreement among Thomists. Indeed I know of no Thomist who does not subscribe to this doctrine. Nor do I see how one could call himself a " Thomist " without doing so. (It is true that Gilson, and like-minded Thomists, do not stress the point because of their interest in the "inner reordering " of the whole of first philosophy to the knowledge of God-the emphasis is expressly upon *final causality).* While Gilson maintains this teaching, he nevertheless forcefully underscores the simple Thomistic point that *God could not be the primary principle of being-in-common were He not Being itself.*

Of course this is not only Gilson's point, it is St. Thomas'. The Angelic Doctor says, for example: "that which is said by essence is the cause of all things that are said by participation. . . . But God is a being-by-essence because He is Being itself *(ipsum esse).* Every other being, however, is a being-by-participation .... Therefore God is the cause of being to all other things." [7] Neither St. Thomas nor Gilson anywhere suggests that God as " principle of being-in-common" is or could be anything other than Being itself-which, to use the more complete Thomistic phrase, means Being-Subsisting-Through-Itself-ipsum *esse per se subsistens.* In a word, *to be being itself is to be self-subsisting Being.*

Now, as Gilson has abundantly shown, St. Thomas derived this notion of God's being primarily from revelation-from the Book

• Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers,* Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1949, p. 157, note 9.

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 157.

• *Op. cit.,* pp. 173, 261-262.

[7] " Quod per essentiam dicitur, est causa omnium quae per participationem dicuntur .... Deus autem est ens per essentiam: quia est ipsum esse. Omne autem aliud ens est per participationem. . . . Deus igitur est causa essendi omnibus aliis." *Summa Contra Gentiles,* II, ch. 15, *#5.*

of Exodus in fact. Still, there is no doubt that for St. Thomas himself this concept is also rationally ascertainable: having proved by purely philosophical argumentation that God's essence is His existence, the Angelic Doctor states immediately: "This sublime truth Moses was taught by Our Lord" (Exodus 3 13, 14). The following is the argument immediately *preceding* that celebrated text: "Every thing exists by the fact that it has *esse.* Therefore a thing whose essence is not its *esse,* does not exist by its essence but by participation in something, viz., in *esse* itself. But that which is by participation in something cannot be the first being, because prior to it is that wherein it participates in order to exist. But God is the first being, to Whom nothing is prior. essence, therefore, is His *esse."* [8]

Fr. O'Brien accepts the "historical demonstration" [9] referred to above, but then immediately proceeds to argue that Gilson has wrongly allowed his " historical thesis concerning Thomism " to dictate his interpretation of the nature of Thomistic metaphysics itself, resulting in its transformation into theology. [10]

Here we reach the center of the issue. Fr. O'Brien's metaphysics is not formally a theology-not even a natural theology (a term to which he objects). Gilson's metaphysics is formally and in full right a natural theology (or, as Thomas Aquinas puts it, a "philosophical theology"), integrated into sacred theology, though formally distinct from it, by its ordination to God. The reason for this doctrine (which, like that of St. Thomas, stresses the finality or final causality involved) is perfectly clear: metaphysics is about being and being is first of all God. That is why our indirect negative-analogical knowledge of God through creatures is by its very nature ordered to a direct positive knowledge of Him as He reveals Himself to be and as He really is in Himself. This is not a transformation of metaphysics into theology, but the simple recognition that meta physics *is* a theology.

Of course the ultimate end of man and of every intellectual creature consists in an immediate intuitive knowledge (*visio)* of

[8] " Omnis res est per hoc quod habet esse. Nulla igitur res cuius essentia non est suum esse, non est per essentiam suam, sed per participationem alicuius, scilicet ipsius esse. Quod autem est per participationem alicuius, non potest esse primum ens: quia id quod aliquid participat ad hoc quod sit, est eo prius. Deus autem est primum ens, quo nihil est prius. Dei igitur essentia est suum esse." Then in the *next* paragraph St. Thomas says: "Hanc autem sublimem veritatem Moyses a Domino est edoctus . . . . " *Summa Contra Gentiles,* I, ch. 22, par. 8-9.

• *Op cit.,* pp. 172-178.

[10] *Ibid.,* pp. 178, :t6:t.

God in Himself-a knowledge which, though not attainable by any created thing by its natural power, *is* attainable because it alone can satisfy the "natural desire" of such a creature; otherwise the latter would in the end have no reason for being: "Since it is impossible that a natural desire be in vain, which would be the case were it not possible to attain to the knowledge of the divine substance, which all minds naturally desire, it is necessary to say that it is possible for the substance of God to be seen by an intellect, both by separate intellectual substances and by our souls." [11]

What relevance to metaphysics has this "natural desire" of the intellectual substance for seeing God Himself, or the "divine substance?" Quite simply, this: metaphysical science is formally and terminally a philosophical theology, to wit, a natural knowledge through creatures of the cause of universal being-God-, which, since it is an imperfect knowledge of Him, is ordained finally to the perfect knowledge of Him *in patria*, by way of vision. Were this not the case, our life would be finally meaningless. Of course Fr. O'Brien knows this, but he speaks as if metaphysics could prescind from it.

It is true that Gilson emphasizes the way of final causality; he is comparatively uninterested in the formal distinction between metaphysics and revealed theology, though he assuredly does not deny it. On the contrary, he insists on it. For example, he says: "Although the relationship established between faith and reason is so intimate, they still constitute two formally distinct types of knowledge, and the same can be said of philosophy and theology .... Even where the two disciplines cover the same ground they keep their specific characters and thus are distinguished from each other." [12]

Now this emphasis of Gilson's on finality is a function of his " existential " approach. For indeed, not to see *esse* as the culminating act within *ens-the perfectio perfectionu7rV-is* not to see *esse* Thomistically. This capital point Etienne Gilson has demonstrated

[11] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, III, ch. 51, #I: "Cum autem impossibile sit naturale desiderium esse inane, quod quidem esset si non esset possible pervenire ad divinam substantiam intelligendam, quod naturaliter omnes mentes desiderant; necesse est dicere quod possibile sit substantiam Dei videri per intellectum, et a substantiis intellectualibus separatis, et ab animabus nostris." Cf. *op. cit.*, III, chs. 87, 48, 52.

[12] *(The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, tr. L. K. Shook, C. S. B.; New York, Random House, 1956, pp. 20-21; *Le Thomisme*, 5th ed., Paris, Vrin, 1944, pp. 85-86) .

more abundantly, I think, than any other modern Thomistic writer; and we are all greatly indebted to him for having done so. To formal causality in metaphysics, however, he has paid relatively little attention. Why? Because, for one thing, on that plane *alone* it would be impossible to distinguish Thomistic " existentialism " from Aristotelian " substantialism," not to mention other forms of " realism " wherein *esse* as existential act is considered to be either peripheral or secondary or scientifically irrelevant. [13] In saying what he has wanted to say, to the end of clearly distinguishing Thomistic metaphysics from all other varieties, Gilson has *had* to follow this path.

Certainly Fr. O'Brien is well aware that a natural theology cut off from supernatural theology would leave the creature ultimately frustrated. Nevertheless, he argues as if it were possible to have a metaphysics which was not formally a " natural theology integral with the metaphysics of existential being," to use the phrase by which he adversely characterizes the position of Fr. Gerard Smith, S. J., and, by implication, other Thomistic "existentialists." [14]

To be sure, much more is involved here than mere personalities; nothing is more futile than controversy on that level. What is objectively at stake is the very existence of Thomistic metaphysics as a science of being: for *in this context the" existentialist" position, in its essentials, is a simple necessity.* Let me underscore this point: to say " being" is, at least Thomistically, to say " that whose act is to be *"-id cuius actus est esse-;* and being *is,* in any case, only because Being is. If this is so, then clearly a Thomistic science of *being* which is not a theology is an utter impossibility. How, then, is it possible to speak of such a thing? Only, so far as I can see, because and in so far as *esse* is thought of essentialistically, or, in the usual phrase, as a "formality "-an intelligibility. This, it seems, is just what Fr. O'Brien does. For after having cor:rectly quoted St. Thomas to the effect that *esse* is the " actuality of all that is," he immediately interprets this in terms of "formality," saying that *esse* is "the most formal of all formalities"- "the definitive note in the term ' being' as the subject of metaphysics." [15] But a " formality " or a " note" is a *what-a* noetic *what,* if you like, but none the less an essence. And no matter how primary or basic this essence may be thought to be, it can never be other than what it is.

[13] E. g., see Gilson, *op. cit.,* Ch. V.

"Fr. O'Brien, *op. cit.,* pp. 94-95.

[15] *Op cit.,* p. 164. True, there is a *'ratio e.ssendi*"-for the word *e.sseJ* does have meaning-, but *esse* itself is not a *ratio.*

The real problem, as Fr. Owens observes in his review of Fr. O'Brien's book/[6] lies in the notion of being with which the author is actually operating, for this notion inevitably will govern his whole conception of metaphysics. This notion Fr. Owens considers to be " difficult to discover." [H] I think it is not, so far as its substance is concerned. Have we not recorded Fr. O'Brien's remark that for him *esse* is "the most formal of all formalities," " the definitive note in the term 'being' as the subject of metaphysics? " Now a non-theological 'science' of 'being,' in the sense of that whose 'act' is to *be,* is utterly impossible, because the only conceivable cause of the presence of *beings* is *Being* itself. But a non-theological ' science ' of ' being,' in the sense of that whose ' act ' is to be a 'formality,' is not only possible, it is ages-old, and may be said to be perennially and even permanently popular.

To make a long story short, such a doctrine is possible because if *esse* as existential act is eliminated from metaphysics in its formal procedure as a demonstrative science of being *qua* being, then its theological *source-lpsum esse-is* likewise formally eliminated therefrom. The only difficulty with such a doctrine is that it will not be a metaphysics of being as be-ing.

On pain of being repetitious, be it noted once more that Thomistic metaphysics says that its subject is universal being and that its subject is scientifically known only when its principle or source is proved to be; so that in this metaphysics the problem of the establishment of God's existence is formally and actually the business, and the chief business, of the science. For, as St. Thomas points out/[8] this sapiential science is at one and the same time, though of course in different respects, a "theology," a "metaphysics," and " first philosophy." Essentially and formally a theology, the science of being-in-common thus will constitute itself a *science* when and only when it resolves the question of God's existence as the principle or cause of being-in-common.

In view of the fact that a Thomistic science of being that is not formally a demonstrative knowledge of the cause of being is an impossibility, how can it be said that the question of God's existence does not formally belong to metaphysics, but to sacred

[16] P. 253. See above, note 1.

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] Preface to his Commentary on Aristotle's Cf. his Commentary on Boethius' *De Trinitate* (V, 4), where he distinguishes between that kind of theology "which is also called metaphysics," and which treats of "divine things as the principles of its subject," and the theology of Sacred Scripture, which treats of divine things " for their own sakes as the subject of the science."

theology? [19] The reason given is that God is the subject, not of metaphysical or philosophical theology, but only of sacred theo-

Certainly the latter statement is true. But how it can be offered as a. reason for taking *that* position is difficult to comprehend. And here I am in the same boat with Fr. Owens, who, after citing the" laudable purpose" of Fr. O'Brien's book, takes exception to the author's "principle of extension" as involving the notion that the consideration of God is an *"extension* of metaphysics." [21] "It is," Fr. Owens gently and ironically says,[22] "hard to see how an 'extension' of St. Thomas' metaphysics is necessary or even possible in order to treat of God as the principle of its subject."

Fr. Owens also objects to the author's "principle of limitation," as requiring that the subject of metaphysics be established formally and solely through natural philosophy, on the score that this would restrict metaphysics to what can be reached through the latter. I agree, for I do not see how this position is compatible with that metaphysics which St. Thomas actually practiced-for example, in the *De Ente et Essentia,* where there is no such "limiting " procedure at all. As Fr. Owens again remarks, "to assert that metaphysics ' cannot assume the prerogative of beginning its pursuit with an inquiry about God' [23] seems equivalent to saying that metaphysics cannot begin by inquiring about the principle of its subject." [24]

Of course this statement of Fr. Owens' applies to the sapiential science of being-in-common *as philosophical theology,* not *as "metaphysica* "-the study of the " trans physical " or transcendental principles *intrinsically common* to that subject. Nevertheless, as we have noted above, this science for St. Thomas *is* a philosophical theology as a knowledge of the principle or cause of being-in-common. Therefore, to prove that that principle exists is to prove that God as *ipsum esse* exists, and this is formally the task of philosophical theology. Nor is it possible for this task to be accomplished, or even initiated, without some "nominal definition" of the word "God"; lacking that, the undertaking of course would have no goal. Fr. O'Brien, however, says that "the function

[19] Fr. O'Brien, *op. cit.,* p. 210.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] Fr. Owens' Review, p. 251. Italics mine. Cf. Fr. O'Brien, *op. cit.,* pp. 115, 151, *re* " the necessity of metaphysics' *extension* to the knowledge of God." (Italics mine).

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] Fr. O'Brien, *op. cit.,* p. 122.

[24] Fr. Owens' Review, p. 258.

of the nominal definition of God is inherently connected with the scientific question *an sit Deus"* (which, he had said/ [5] pertains formally only to sacred theology). "But the formal proposal of this question by metaphysics," he goes on to say, [26] " is based upon positions adverse to the principle of limitation, and thus to the nature of metaphysics as a science." This "principle of limitation r here refers to the restriction of the subject of metaphysics to being-in-common. And indeed it is so restricted. Need it be said again, however, that the principle of that subject can be none other than Being itself, the demonstration of whose existence is precisely the chief task of Thomistic metaphysics as a science-a task that necessitates and presupposes some definition of the name " God " to begin with?

Nothing could be more useless (nor less conducive to charity) than personal controversy. Happily, however, the basic issue does not lie there; it rather concerns the very existence of a metaphysics (yes, taken *formalissime* !) of " existential being," viz. of that-whose-act-is-to be, or exist. The purpose of this writing is, by emphasizing the impossibility of a Thomistic metaphysics of being as be-ing which is not formally a philosophical theology, to vindicate the existence of such an " existentialism." If the latter doctrine is authentically Thomistic, then to ' defend' Etienne Gilson is to ' defend ' St. Thomas Aquinas. Such an *apologia* would indeed seem presumptuous, if not absurd, were it not for the fact (as I see it) that the core of this metaphysics is so widely misunderstood, or missed, precisely by teachers of St. Thomas, and therefore inevitably by their students.

Returning to the opening paragraph of this paper, let it be said that if Gilson does " proceed existentially " in the most radical sense it is because there is no other way of proceeding Thomistically in metaphysics. Why? The reason is evident: the subject of that metaphysics is *ens,* and *ens* means that-whose-act-is-to *exist.* The movement of Thomistic metaphysics is from *ens-of* course grasped in sensible *entia-to* that *Ens* which is *lpsum esse-the Primum Ens,* God. What are the *quinque viae* except ways of attaining to the existnece of this supreme Existent? Far from transforming metaphysics into theology, Gilson insists upon the fact that it *is* a theology. We are all immensely in his debt for his copious and lucid exposition of this doctrine.

JAMES F. ANDERSON

ViUanova University
Villanova, Pennsylvania

•• *Op. cit.,* p.

•• *Ibid.,* p.

NOTES ON OUR CONTRIBUTORS

JoHN PATRICK REID, 0. P., S. T. L., Professor at Providence College, Providence, R.I., recent lecturer for an educational television series on Communism, has published several translations of scholarly works for The Thomist Press and the Providence College Press, Providence, R.I.

HARRY LA PLANTE, Ph. D., who attended the University of Notre Dame and was an instructor in the Department of Philosophy, Marygrove College, Detroit, Michigan, is presently employed at the Detroit Institute of Technology, Detroit, Michigan.

EowARD M. MAcKINNON, S. J., Ph. D., (theoretical physics, St. Louis University) who has written for scientific journals and contributed philosophical articles to *The Modern Schoolman, Thought, The International Philosophical Quarterly,* is now engaged in post-doctoral research in the philosophy of science at Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

JAMEs F. ANDERSON, Ph. D., (University of Toronto) professor of Philosophy at Villanova University, Villanova, Pennsylvania has written several books on philosophy, including *The Bond of Being* and *The Cause of Being,* and translated several works and treatises of St. Thomas, including Book *II-Summa Contra Gentiles* and *Treatise on Man* from *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas.

CYRIL VoLLERT, S. J., Ph. D., S. T. D., who taught at the Gregorian University, Rome in 1949, and frequently contributes to scholarly journals including *Theological Studies, Gregorianum,* is professor of theology, St. Mary's College, St. Marys, Kansas.

PHILIP L. B. HANLEY, 0. P., M.A., S. T. D., author of *Collegiate Theology for Catholic Living* is an Associate Professor of Theology at Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana.

FRANK KEEGAN, Ph. D., associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Georgetown University, Washington, D. C., was instrumental in establishing the Jacques Maritain Center at Notre Dame University.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Wisdom of Evolution. By RAYMOND J. NoaAR, 0. P., Ph. D. Foreword by Theodosius Dobzhansky. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1963. Pp. 408, with index. $5.75.

Publication of works on every aspect of evolution continues in undiminished flow to meet and stimulate interest in this engrossing subject. Not many authors, however, can match Father Nogar's competence in the various disciplines that contribute importantly to a balanced presentation of evolutionary doctrine. His scientific studies, concentrating on biology, are crowned by a graduate degree in theology and a doctorate in the philosophy of science. Such preparation has equipped him to write a book having a definite objective which he himself regards as unique in the field.

The point of view dominating the exposition is not that of the research biologist or anthropologist, but rather that of the philosopher of science who is concerned with the whole range of implications suggested by the fact of evolution. Consequently the book is neither a specialized scientific treatise nor a professional course in philosophy. The aim is threefold, corresponding to the three major divisions of the volume. First, the proofs for the fact of evolution are examined. Secondly, the limits of evolution are carefully marked off. Thirdly, an attempt is made to give a synthesis of scientific evolution and to outline a sound philosophy of life in agreement with the facts as known at present. The exposition is clear throughout and many technical terms, inevitable in such an enterprise, are lucidly explained; the educated reader will seldom find himself beyond his depth.

Part One is a truly remarkable review of the evidence for evolution. Beginning with paleontology, as is right, Fr. Nogar applies the "principle of economy": God ordinarily works in an orderly fashion through natural causes, not by miraculous intervention. The study leads to the reasonable conclusion that creationism in the Linnaean sense is a wholly unsatisfactory hypothesis. Unless one is willing to assume a host of creative acts to account for the hundreds of thousands of different origins of species, some form of evolution must be admitted. The only adequate explanation of the facts unearthed by paleontology is organic evolution, defined as descent with modification from common ancestry.

The witness of paleontology, strong though it is, merely opens the case. A verdict in favor of evolution is the product of many lines of proof, marshaled with mounting force in successive chapters. Perception that all organisms which now live or have ever lived are the issue of genetic descent from remote and simple beginnings gains increasing clarity. The evidence

brought forward by paleontology, genetics, biography, taxonomy, comparative anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, embryology, and other sciences, converge inexorably on a single conclusion: the evolution of life is undoubtedly the best explanation of the facts adduced by all these sciences.

The very power of evolution raises a question: is the process of evolution limitless in extent, or does the mind in quest of truth have to recognize limits in its applicability? Part Two faces this problem, and starts out with an enquiry into human evolution. Has biological man originated from a biological stock in common with other anthropoids? Biological methods exhibit man's close structural and functional similarity to non-human primates. The same life procedures operate in man as in other mammals, and the similarity increases as we come to the great apes. The sciences of prehistory and biology, along with others, contribute testimony pointing to the same general conclusion: descent with modification. Nevertheless, the origin of man cannot be decided on the basis of his bodily nature alone. Evidence fumished by psychology and the cultural sciences brings out man's psychosocial superiority. Some of man's faculties and his behavior must have a spiritual source. The human soul, the spiritual principle of man's distinctive activities, lies beyond the scrutiny of the natural sciences. The theory of evolution cannot explain the origin of man as a whole, since it is unable to account fully for his spiritual and intellectual life, his history, and his destiny.

In connection with the limits of evolution, Fr. Nogar takes pains to describe the various senses and values of the term " evolution " as applied to the organic and inorganic domains. Biological evolution is one thing; psychosocial evolution is another. The origin of the elements, of stars and galaxies, of planets, of life from non-life, is frequently regarded as an evolutionary process. What is retained is the space-time concept of continual, natural change and development. Beyond this diminished meaning, the word alters its definition and becomes equivocal. Misuse of the term leads from evolution in the strict sense through a variety of ideologies and isms, and ends up with a quite unscientific evolutionism, an illusion that evolution explains all things and that absolutely nothing is fixed or immutable.

Analysis of the power and limits of evolution manifests the need for an integral philosophy of evolution. Development of such a philosophy represents a challenge to modem man. In Part III Fr. Nogar attempts a sketch of some phases of a philosophy of evolution that will be cognizant of the vast advances in science up to our day. The philosophy of the past is not to be simply rejected; what is required is not so much a new look as a fresh look, discarding only obsolete and erroneous aspects of former world views. In particlar, the dimension of evolution must be dominant. The static order of nature must be complemented by the dynamic order, which preserves

all the harmony of the static order but adds to it the dimension of movement in time and space. Most important of all, evolutionary research, with its accentuation of trends, tempo, direction, progress, and modes of evolution, can conduce to new insights into the existence and providence of God. In the contemporary view of the universe, in which order succeeds order in a most orderly way, the activity of the Creator must be recognized *as* necessary, not only to keep His creation in existence, but to guide the continuance of the dynamic order toward its eventual consummation.

Considerations along these lines are developed clearly and cogently. One cannot but wonder, however, why the author drew so sparingly, in his final chapters, on the cosmic vision so inspiringly portrayed by Teilhard de Chardin.

CYRIL VoLLERT, S. J.

St. Mary's College
St. Marys, Kansas

The Nature of the Mystical Body. By ERNEST MuRA, tr. from the French by M. Angeline Bouchard. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1963. Pp. 293

The merit of this book is that it gathers together in one volume discussions of the seven kinds of union in the Mystical Body between Christ and His members, unifies the multiplicity by one principle, and deepens understanding of that principle. The book is divided into two parts, with two sections, or " articles," to the second part.

In the first the author gives forty-four pages of exegesis of the doctrine of St. Paul as derived from our Lord's teaching and from his experience with the faith given him so dramatically. Fr. Mura reveals an awareness of modem methods of reading Scripture scientifically, by giving the development of St. Paul's thought according to the best chronology of his epistles. A characteristic of the exegesis is both an absence of the melodramatic, " It used to be thought St. Paul meant, but ... " and a courteous disagreement. with some exegesis on the implied grounds that the Church has not said definitively. For example, on *Genesis* 3 :15, interpreted as containing "implicitly the entire dogma of the Mystical Body" ... of "Jesus and the faithful," the author notes: "This generally accepted exegesis would find its confirmation in St. Paul's interpretation of the promise made to Abraham: Gal. 3 :16; Gen. 22:18. Thematically, the presentation of the Pauline thought seems faultless."

The unifying principle of the second part is stated on pages 65-68. The multiple principles of unity between Christ and His members are gathered under the principle of Christ's supernatural efficient causality. Juridical

unity, moral unity, union through efficient causality, sacramental union, union in the Holy Spirit, union through exemplary causality and through final causality-of all these principles of unity the most important one, the one that more than any other accounts for the mysterious reality of the total Christ, is the principle of efficient causality. Around the principle of supernatural efficient causality, of the life-giving action of Christ the Savior and His members, can be grouped all the other principles of unity, whether because they are the presupposed conditions, or the means of applying the vital influx of Christ, or because they are its necessary consequence and complement. In chapters devoted to discussion of each kind of unity, the author demonstrates his basic thought, bringing the whole together in a thorough analysis of what St. Thomas meant by calling Christ and His members "a mystical person" (Ilia., q. 48, a. fl, ad 1).

Somewhere between calling the Mystical Body a supernatural union, as Fr. Mura develops at length in the Introduction, and falling into the error of those who would make a physical unity of the whole Christ, many stand who intue that there is something more than moral about the union of Christ and the faithful. The author asks two questions: 1) Do the Head and the members have a common being, a common subsistence? 2) Can we attribute to the same subject or person (supposit) what Christ does and what His members do? His conclusion: "Through grace Jesus is the subsistence of his Mystical Body." Following Fr. Chardon *(La Croix de Jesus,* c. 1), the author opts for the expression "a mystical subsistence," while regretting (in a footnote) that the term "subsistence has a meaning that is too precise, too profoundly hallowed in the mystery of the Trinity and the Incarnation . . . to permit of transferring its meaning by analogy to the order of *esse secundum,* or of operation, which is the order of grace."

> This mystical subsistence, daring as the expression may seem, signifies nothing but the multiple union that divine grace establishes between Christ and the members of the Church, a dependence of being and of operation *similar* (not identical) to that of the members with respect to the human person and to the head that governs it ... Jesus Himself proclaimed a single Person and a single Jesus Christ when he said to St. Paul ... " Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me? ... I am the Jesus whom thou art persecuting." . . . In the mystical Christ we find analogically realized through santifying grace the two essential marks of personality: (1) the total Christ possesses a being in common with the Head and the members; (2) we can attribute to the whole Christ and to his Head the actions and sufferings of the members as such . . . (pp. 193-195).

Fr. Mura makes all the necessary distinctions in thus trying to deepen understanding of the expression " a mystical person," but this is precisely what makes for awkwardness in the analysis: by the time we have finished with the distinctions we are left with the initial intuition-and, Fr. Mura's encouragement that the intuition is a valid one. On the other hand, the analysis is so carefully and cogently developed that the author does a

valid work of theology in exposing the depth of the reality St. Thomas designated " a mystical person."

The second section of this second part has to do with the various parts, the Soul, the Head, and the members of the Mystical Body, with respect to the Church Triumphant, Suffering, and Militant. This part is disappointing. But the author expresses the hope that his second and companion work, on the activity of the Mystical Body, will be published in English, in which we would hope to £nd something more than we have here. Although the author is well aware of what is "going on" with regard to the laity, he assures them they are called to be saints and that the chief work of the hierarchy is to make saints of them. Of the " separated brethren," Fr. Mura would not think of speaking as " churches " or " communities " or " other believers in Christ"; his language here is so "traditional" as to "be offensive to modern pious ears." By treating of heretics and schismatics formally and in an exclusively objective way, he can say: "deplorable" and "wretched" state," separated,"" ceased to belong to the body," who" £nd consolation" from "the division even yesterday." The "Mohammedan" (Muslim?)- " fanaticism shuts them off from the light of revelation." The Jews-" the blood they once called down upon their heads." A young man among the Martyrs of Uganda became successively "Mohammedan" and Protestant, but found truth and tranquillity, as his father had prophesied, only when converted by The White Fathers. Fr. Mura may be yet declared right in his *attitude;* but it does not appear that we shall henceforth be *encouraged* so to speak.

The translation is idiomatic, except for a few rare instances. Many pertinent " small points " will be hard to find again because of the lack of an Index. The scholarship is evident: up-to-date exegesis; integration with the Fathers of the Church; sharp appraisals of the contribution of modern and contemporary writers; a touch of the lives of the saints with the intuitions of the mystics; and speculative theology carrying the burden of bringing understanding to men of faith. A book not beyond the graduate student, certainly for seminarians, and of .course the priest-teacher, and anyone who is studious enough to want to know about the essence as well as the existence of "the mystical person."

PHILIP HANLEY, O. P.

University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana

The Achievement of Jacques and Ra'issa Maritain: A Bibliography 1906-1961. By DoNALD and !DELLA GALLAGHER. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co.,

Like other collectors, bibliographers know the scents of the hunt and the delights of a good find. Donald and !della Gallagher have known many such scents and delights in the ten years spent compiling *The Achievement of Jacques and Ra'issa Maritain.*

Sensibly arranged with an excellent number system, it is copiously cross-referenced with significant annotations. Books and parts of books, prefaces and articles by Maritain comprise the major, and most valuable portion, Parts I-IV. Books and articles about Maritain make up Part V and VI with Raissa 1.\'Iaritain's writings concluding the volume.

The Gallaghers wisely cross-referenced Maritain's books and articles. Without it, the bibliography would have been only half as valuable. Maritain's well-known practice of writing and rewriting original essays-sometimes to the point of transmutation-make it mandatory for the bibliographer and scholar to follow the persistent themes of his writing from article to book, from edition to edition.

Of course there are omissions, but of course there had to be. Here or there one may note the absence of an article (" L'Allemagne et Ia philosophie moderne," *La Foi Catholique,* XVI (1915), Pp. 5-30), a manifesto ("Pour un parti de !'intelligence," *Le Figaro,* 19 juillet, 1919), a series (Peguy's *Cahiers de la Quinzaine* or Lefevre's *Une Heure avec ...*), a doctoral dissertation. (Marshall Suther's now published application of Maritain's aesthetics, *The Dark Night of Samuel Taylor Coleridge).* But the losses are slight. A learned guess is that nine of every ten pieces the Maritains wrote for publication are contained here.

If one is indebted to a bibliographer, bibliographers are indebted to one another. Unfortunately there is no acknowledgment of the earlier bibliographers of Maritain. To Wladimir Ghika in to Charles O'Donnell in 1940, to Ruth Byrns in 1943, to Abbe Charles Journet in 1948, and especially to Sister Carmelita in 1955, the Gallaghers are extremely indebted. Perhaps a half or two-thirds of the Gallaghers' bibliography of Maritain's works could be assembled by a mere collation of the earlier bibliographies. Some acknowledgement would have been appropriate.

And some criticism must be registered against the division of Maritain's career in the introductory essay. That career does not fall so neatly into 1906-1918, 1919-1939, 1940-1961. These chronological divisions correspond to the great wars of our time and to the residences of the Maritains. They do not correspond to the development of Jacques Maritain's thought. In other ways, this bibliography presents itself as a philosophical appreciation of Maritain's vast corpus. Much strength would have been added to that

appreciation if the divisions were more responsive to the internal necessities of thought and the genealogy of his ideas. One important division is the year the date of the condemnation of *Action Francaise* by Pope Pius XI. Maritain's political and social philosophy did not exist before nor did it reach the maturity of his earlier metaphysical writing until the 1930's.

But these are small *caveats* which do not affect the bibliography itself. The achievement of Donald and !della Gallagher ranks immediately as a handbook and indispensable tool for Maritain scholarship in the French and English-speaking worlds.

FRANK .J. KEEGAN

Georgetown University
Washington, D. C.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Alastruey, G., *The Blessed Virgin Mary* (vol. 2). Transl. by Sister M. Janet La Giglia, O. P. St. Louis, Mo.: B. Herder Book Co., 1964. Pp. vi, 312. $6.00.

Christian, W. A., *Meaning and Truth in Religion.* Princeton, N. J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1964. Pp. 273. $6.00.

Daim, W., M.D., *Depth Psychology and Salvation.* Transl. by K. F. Reinhardt. N. Y.: Frederick Ungar Publ. Co., 1963. Pp. 315. $8.50.

David Hume on Religion. Edited with intro. by R. Wolheim. N. Y.: World Publ. Co., 1964 (ML 172). Pp. 287. $1.95.

Kahler, E., *The Meaning of History.* N. Y.: George Braziller, 1964. Pp. viii, 224. $5.00.

Kemp, J., *Reason, Action and Morality* (International Library of Philosophy and Scientific Method). N. Y.: Humanities Press, 1964. Pp. viii, 208. $6.00.

Kinzer, D. L., *An Episode in Anti-Catholicism* (The American Protective Association). Seattle, Wash.: Univ. of Washington Press, 1964. Pp. ix, 342. *$6.50.*

Klausner, S. Z., *Psychiatry and Religion.* N.Y.: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964. Pp. xvi, 299. $6.95.

Lazerowitz, M., *Studies in Metaphilosophy* (International Library of Philosophy and Scientific Method). N. Y.: Humanities Press, 1964. Pp. xi, 264. *$5.00.*

Lonning, Per, *The Dilemma of Contemporary Theology.* N. Y.: Humanities Press, 1964. Pp. 140. $3.00.

-Munier, A., *A Manual of Philosophy* (vol. 1). N. Y-.: Desclee Co., 1964. Pp. 580. $8.50.

O'Connor, D. J. (ed.), *A Critical History of Western Philosophy.* London: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1964. Pp. vi, 604. $9.95.

Pegis, A. C., *St. Thomas and Philsophy* (The Aquinas Lecture, 1964). Milwaukee, Wise.: Marquette Univ. Press, 1964. Pp. 89. $2.50.

Santayana, The Wisdom of, selected and edited by I. D. Cardiff. N. Y.: Philosophical Library, 1964. Pp. xvi, 325. $7.50.

Schleck, C. A., C. S.C., *The Sacrament of Matrimony.* Milwaukee, Wise.: Bruce Publ. Co., 1964. Pp. xii, 290. $5.00.

Sullivan, D. J., *An Introduction to Philosophy* (revised and enlarged edition). Milwaukee, Wise.: Bruce Publ. Co., 1964. Pp. xvi, 328. $4.50.